

THE FAVORITE

VOL. I.—No. 21.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1873.

PRICE { FIVE CENTS,
OR SIX CENTS, U. S. C.

OLD DREAMS OF LOVE.

Old dreams of love—old dreams of love,
From which we woke too soon,
In memory now they only prove
Like some remembered tune—
Some spell that shadows each bright thing
That faded first away,
When life, was like an endless spring—
A joyous, sunny day.

Old dreams of love!

Old dreams of love—old dreams of love,
Too bright, too sweet to last;
What beautiful forms around us move—
Still shadows of the past!
Of all we knew—the sweetest, best—
How few their number seems!
Those lips we loved, those hands we pressed,
We only meet in dreams.

Old dreams of love!

FEUDAL TIMES; OR, TWO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE.

A Romance of Daring and Adventure.

(Translated especially for the FAVORITE from
the French of Paul Duplessis.)

CHAPTER XIV.

A FATAL NIGHT.

At the terrible news of the capture of the chateau a cloud seemed to pass before the chevalier's sight; a horrible spasm shot through his heart, and he was obliged to support himself against a wall to avoid falling.

This keen emotion was of short duration however. The thought of the dangers to which Diane was exposed brought back to him all his energy; his blood boiled in his veins, and, roused to sublime fury, he bounded to her assistance.

The apartments occupied by Diane were situated at the end of the chateau opposite to the room used by Sforzi. Before he could reach the young girl he had, therefore, to traverse almost the entire length of the building. Should he arrive in time to save her, or, at least, to die beside her, making a rampart of his body to protect her? The uncertainty drove him almost mad.

He had reached within two bounds of the extremity of a passage terminating in a narrow flight of stairs leading to the lower floor, when a dozen of the marquis's soldiers appeared at the bottom of the stairs. At sight of Sforzi, the wretches uttered a roar of ferocious pleasure.

"Death to the Huguenot! Down with the rebel!"

"Success is in audacity," said Raoul to himself. "Forward!"

With a bound, he sprang head-first and sword in hand into the midst of his adversaries. So little did the marquis's people expect such an act of temerity, that for a moment they made no resistance. Three of them, roughly struck down, rolled upon the ground, uttering cries of distress. The chevalier continued on his road.

Unfortunately the assassins quickly recovered from their surprise, and, exasperated by the humiliating check they had received, rushed after Sforzi with redoubled fury. The lower floor, which, thanks to his impetuosity, the chevalier reached uninjured, was, like the floor he had quitted, bounded by a narrow passage, in which it was possible for him to defend himself, only one enemy at a time being able to attack him.

Turning suddenly, therefore, like a boar at bay, Raoul put himself quickly on guard, and, with a hoarse yell, took the initiative. His sword flashed like lightning, a body fell heavily on the damp pavement, and a cry of suffering rang through the passage; it was one of the soldiers, struck full in the middle of the throat, struggling in his last agonies. Then Raoul forgot all—Diane, whom he sought to save, the desperation of his own position, and the impossibility of sustaining a struggle so unequal. His



"YES, DEAD! MURDERED!" REPEATED LEHARDY.

violent instincts, thoroughly awakened, were now exploding with irresistible fury!

For nearly a minute nothing was heard but breath heavily drawn, the groans of the dying, and the clank of steel. Two torches carried by the assailants threw their red glare confusedly on this scene of carnage, which exhibited a picture at once shocking and magnificent. So far Raoul's wild transports had served him better than prudence could have done. Striking at hazard, in the midst of that seething mass of men, he had remained safe and sound, without receiving the smallest injury.

The first paroxysm of fury passed—that fury which, not unreasonably, Sforzi considered and deplored as a malady—he reflected, and, with the marvellous clearness of insight which danger gives to strong minds, saw that an advantage was to be drawn from the confusion caused by his irresistible attack. A second sufficed him to conceive a plan—a minute to execute it.

Three or four paces behind him he had noticed a large window. He collected his strength, whirled his sword about him with bewildering rapidity, and then, profiting by the retrograde movement made by his adversaries on this redoubling of hostilities, he stepped backwards swiftly, sprang through the window, and alighted from a height of nearly fifteen feet in the garden below.

Safe, at least for a moment, from pursuit, Raoul rested for an instant; his throat was dry, his limbs were giving way under the weight of his body; myriads of stars sparkled before his eyes, and his ears were filled with a confused roar, depriving him both of sight and hearing. He took off his coat of mail and threw himself down upon the wet grass, from which he eagerly sucked the dew with which it was laden. Somewhat calmed and refreshed he drew deep breaths of air charged with the perfumes of the

night; and then replaced his coat of mail, wiped the blood from his sword, and sprang through the hornbeams in the direction of the apartments occupied by Diane.

While the chevalier was hurrying to the aid of Mademoiselle d'Erlanges, the interior of the chateau presented the shocking appearance of a place in war time taken by assault. At butchery, unresisted and pitiless, was proceeding at twenty different spots. The defenders of the chateau, surprised in the midst of their sleep, were massacred as they were discovered. It is impossible to convey an idea of the implacable ferocity displayed by the marquis's armed men. Drunk with wine and blood, they revelled in their devilish work of human destruction.

But the most remarkable scene of this fatal night passed in the bed-chamber of the Dame d'Erlanges. There the victim and the executioner found themselves face to face.

The châtelaine was seated in a large chair, ornamented with her coat of arms and raised a step above the floor; she preserved a superb attitude. Nothing in her appearance denoted either horror or alarm. The marquis stood before her a few paces removed, his sword in the scabbard, and his head covered with his plumed hat. Though he affected a calm equal to that of the châtelaine, it was easy to discover, by the contraction of the muscles of his face, and by the sinister light glittering in his eyes, that all his evil passions were unchained.

"Marquis de la Tremblais," said the Dame d'Erlanges, "those fresh cries announce to me that the iniquitous work is not yet entirely completed, and that there is yet time, if you will, to save some of my unfortunate servants. In the name of your salvation in the other world, Marquis de la Tremblais, go and interpose your authority between the murderers and their victims!"

"Madame," replied the marquis, without

moving from his place, "war has its fatal and painful exigencies. I have promised my people to give up to them the garrison of Tauve—a gentleman always keeps his word!"

"A gentleman!" repeated the Dame d'Erlanges, in a tone of sovereign contempt. "Ah, marquis, if in your impiety you laugh at divine justice, at least do not clash with the prejudices of this world—do not call a thief and assassin a gentleman!"

"Madame!" cried the marquis, turning pale at this outrage, "do not abuse my patience any longer. Do not forget that, as my vassal, you owe me obedience and respect."

"Obedience to a robber! respect to a cut-throat! You must have a very poor opinion of my judgment, Monsieur de la Tremblais, to think of making such demands."

"Madame—madame, I repeat, take care! Let what is passing around you serve you as a warning! Do you not hear the agony of your accomplices—of the people who have dared to support you in your rebellion? Up to the present I have wished to spare you the chastisement due to you. Do not make me regret my clemency, or, by hell, you shall repent it!"

"Marquis," replied the châtelaine, coldly, "I hold the memory of my late husband, the Count d'Erlanges, in too much veneration to condescend to discussion with you. You know well that, after God in heaven and the king on earth, I am not called on to bow myself to any seigneur. Do not stamp with the heel of your boot, marquis. I care nothing for your anger—it is powerless against my resignation and my right. What can you do against me? Strip me of my fortune? It is already done! Deprive me of life? My soul is prepared to appear before its Maker! You see, I have nothing to fear from you, marquis."

"This is too much!" cried Monseigneur de la Tremblais. "You forget, old sorceress of Beelzebub, that your accursed den contains at least a delectable creature! Since your ugliness shields you from my vengeance, your daughter, Diane, shall recompense me for your villainies!"

"Diane! my daughter Diane! You dare!" cried the châtelaine, shuddering, all her coolness deserting her at this terrible threat. "Seigneur de la Tremblais, do not forget that there is a king of France! Sooner or later your crime will meet with chastisement! Hold, marquis! I withdraw all I have said to your injury. Swear to me that nothing shall be attempted against my daughter, and I will never lodge any complaint against you, and will submit without a murmur to the loss of my fortune."

"Be sure, you old fool," interrupted the marquis—"and the smallest portion of sense might have enabled you to understand as much—your daughter is too charming and desirable for me to do attending to distress her. Woe to any of my people who dare lay a finger on her! I will have them hanged out of hand!"

"Are you serious in what you say?"

"Silence, old Huguenot! Not only do I say that Diane is in no danger at this moment, but that she is destined speedily to enjoy a high honor. I intend to take her for my mistress."

"Diane your mistress!" repeated the châtelaine, with indescribable alarm. "Oh, you are jesting. You are trying to terrify me, no doubt!"

"Jesting!" exclaimed the marquis, with a horrid laugh. "I'll show you how much I am in a jesting mood. Ho, Benoist, go and bring me here the gentle demoiselle Diane!"

From the wicked smile which this order brought to the lips of the Chief of the Apostles, it was easy to see how pleasant it was to him, and with what alacrity he would hasten to discharge it.

The Dame d'Erlanges raised her head, which for a moment had been bowed down, sprang from her chair, and placed herself in front of the door.

"No one shall leave this room without first passing over my body!" she cried, resolutely.

Benoist paused, and questioned his master by a look.

"Obey!" said the marquis, hoarsely.

The Chief of the Apostles coolly drew a pistol from his breast, cocked it, and placed the muzzle against the châtelaine's forehead.

"Madame," he cried roughly, "allow me to go and fetch your daughter, or I shall have to blow out your brains!"

The only answer the châtelaine returned was to bolt the door.

"Mad-brained Huguenot!" growled Benoist, discharging his pistol.

The unfortunate Dame d'Erlanges sank upon the floor, murmuring:

"Diane! All powerful heaven! Marquis, I curse you!"

She was dead. Benoist, as little moved by this frightful assassination as if it were a matter of the commonest occurrence, pushed aside the châtelaïne's body with his foot, and passed out of the room.

Brave Lehardy, after informing the chevalier of the capture of the château, had hurried with all speed to Diane; but, more fortunate than Raoul, he had not encountered any enemies on his way, and reached the apartments of his young mistress without impediment. He found Diane, already aroused by the noise, up and partly dressed. In a few words he explained to her the desperate situation of affairs, and then passed to what was more pressing:

"Do not be alarmed, mademoiselle," he cried; "I will do my best to save you. Follow me."

"Where to, Lehardy?"

"Two steps from this place. In your servant's room there is a secret door of which I have the key. This door leads out into the country. Come, mademoiselle, the moments are precious."

"But—my mother?"

"Madame la Comtesse runs no danger, I am sure. Come, mademoiselle, come."

Diane, reflecting on the feeble aid which her presence could afford to her mother, was preparing to obey, when an outburst of furious sounds close by froze her with terror and paralyzed her movements.

"Malediction!" cried Lehardy. "The assassins are here—it is too late!"

It was at that moment the Dame d'Erlanges fell under the bullet of the Chief of the Apostles.

At the approach of the bandits, Diane exhibited no alarm. She was pale and her bosom heaved, but beyond these slight indications of agitation, nothing in her face betrayed the agony that was rending her heart. Her eyes gleamed with a dark fire, announcing a firm and powerful resolution.

"My brave Lehardy," she said, "if heaven by a miracle, permits you to escape the dangers which environ us, tell my mother that I died pronouncing her name. As to the Chevalier Raoul Sforzi, he has been very good and devoted to us—I shall await him in heaven!"

"Die! you, mademoiselle! Oh, impossible! You are overcome by terror. Who would dare to kill you?"

"I myself, Lehardy," replied Diane. "Do you think that I will cowardly submit to the outrages of the marquis? Heaven forgive me! I am a D'Erlanges, and a D'Erlanges has never failed in honor!" And as she pronounced these words she showed Lehardy a dagger with which she had armed herself.

The old servitor uttered a cry of despair, and stamped violently upon the floor.

"You are right, mademoiselle!" he exclaimed. "A D'Erlanges never failed. But wait awhile. I will make a desperate attempt!"

"It is too late! Hark! Some one is rushing this way!" replied Diane.

"Wait awhile, I say, mademoiselle; the steps may not be coming here."

Lehardy cocked his arquebuse, and projecting his body out of the partially opened door, fired. A cry of suffering followed the discharge, and the assailants stopped.

"The wretches fear a trap, mademoiselle, and are consulting as to what they shall do," cried Lehardy. "We could not have a better chance—let us profit by it!"

Lehardy seized a lighted candle from Diane's *précédent*, and held it to the wide hangings which hung from the ceiling. In a moment a whirl of smoke and flame filled the room and poured out of the door. Seizing his young mistress in his arms, Lehardy lifted her from the floor, and rushed forward with all the strength afforded him by despair.

Raoul Sforzi, somewhat recovered from the overwhelming fatigue of the combat, was making his way towards Diane's apartments, when he saw an immense sheet of flame burst out before him.

"Heaven!" he cried, "the assassins have set fire to the château! Diane, Diane—I am here! Oh, I shall be too late to save her. Nothing will remain to me but to die!"

At that moment he caught sight of the group of murderers upon whom Lehardy had fired. A roar like that of a tiger burst from his chest.

"Diane, my beloved!" he cried, "if I cannot save, I can at least avenge you!"

He dashed upon the marquis's soldiers.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LION VANQUISHED.

It was not a combat, but death, the Chevalier Sforzi went to seek. The sacrifice of his life, to which he was resigned, quintupled his strength. He thought not of victory; his one sole object was to avenge Diane, whom he believed to be dead, and to give her a sanguinary funeral. He attacked the marquis's people with unequalled impetuosity and rage.

The two first who opposed themselves to his terrible sword fell grievously wounded. Not encouraged, he redoubled his energy, and a third opponent quickly fell before him with his skull cleft.

"Assassins," he cried, "I will destroy the whole of you!"

Cowed for a moment by the chevalier's overwhelmingly vehement and victorious attack, the marquis's men speedily recovered from their panic on seeing that they had to do with

one man only. They numbered twenty. Their swords, daggers and poignards quickly formed a deadly circle, of which the centre was Raoul's breast.

The vengeance which had drawn him towards those whom he looked upon as the murderers of Diane did not yet appear to him sufficiently complete; he desired to mow down a more ample harvest. By a vigorous bound he tried to break through the ranks of his adversaries, but unfortunately his foot slipped in the blood of the man he had first struck down, and he fell to the ground helpless.

In an instant the marquis's men were upon him, and in another instant his life would have been taken, but for an altogether unexpected intervention.

"Woe to whoever touches this wretch!" cried the Chief of the Apostles, appearing suddenly upon the scene. "Monseigneur intends that this Sforzi—unworthy of the end of an honorable soldier—shall perish on the gibbet, after being put to long torture. Disarm the scoundrel, and drag him before monseigneur."

Though the mercenaries were loth not to complete their easy victory, the prospect offered by Benoist promised such a reward to their ferocity that they obeyed his order without much grumbling. Twenty powerful arms seized Raoul and dragged rather than conducted him into the chamber of the murdered Dame d'Erlanges, where the marquis still remained.

At sight of the prisoner, the Marquis de la Tremblais could not repress a cry of satisfaction. A sigh of relief rose from his chest, and an indefinable expression of joy glittered in his eyes. He rose from his chair, advanced slowly towards the man he had so cruelly insulted, and gazed at him in silence. His face, prematurely withered by his passions, reflected all the evil suggestions of his heart. He already tasted his vengeance.

Raoul submitted without opposition to the marquis's examination. Still palpitating under the fatigue and excitement of his last struggle, he but dimly saw what was passing around him. The mocking voice of the marquis roused him from his physical depression and torpor of mind.

"Your presence at Tauve, fellow, does not at all surprise me," said the marquis. "Knowing the sort of ruffians the Dame d'Erlanges had hired to aid her in her rebellion, I expected to see you here again."

"Monsieur," replied Raoul, trying to recover his coolness, "your conduct no more surprises me than my presence here surprises you. Cowardice and cruelty go together, marquis. Your conduct towards the Dame d'Erlanges is worthy of you! How proud you must be of your nocturnal exploit! People murdered in their beds, the house of a noble and defenceless lady broken into, despoiled, sacked from ground to roof—how admirable and glorious! But take my advice, marquis, do not yet proclaim your victory! It is impossible that the noblesse of Auvergne will consent, by inaction, to become the accomplices of your crime. But even if the noblesse in this province should fail in their duty, is there not the power of the king? Henry III. will lend an ear to the supplications of the Dame d'Erlanges, and will draw down an exemplary punishment on your infamy!"

Assured of his vengeance, the marquis took no heed of the chevalier's boldness of speech, but replied:

"The Dame d'Erlanges has already paid the penalty of her rebellion. She is no more!"

"What?" cried Raoul. "Oh! impossible! you are jesting! The Dame d'Erlanges dead! dead, like her daughter—her servants! No! I say again, it is impossible!"

The marquis, without replying, crossed to the châtelaïne's bed, and with a firm hand drew aside the hangings.

"Look!" he said.

Raoul turned, and beheld the body of the Dame d'Erlanges lying bathed in her blood.

At this frightful spectacle, which brought to his mind with such poignant reality the supposed death of Diane, Sforzi passed his hands several times before his eyes; his looks became haggard, and told of madness. In truth, under the terrible blow received by his heart, he felt his reason giving way; he doubted the evidence of his senses, and was tempted to believe himself under the influence of a dream. He soon awakened to the truth, however.

"Infamous wretch!" he cried, hoarsely, and mechanically grasping the scabbard of his sword, while a flash of indescribable fury darted from his eyes, he advanced towards the marquis until their chests nearly met, and then, with a movement rapid as thought, he raised his right hand and struck him full in the face.

Words are impotent to describe the marquis's rage. His first action was to draw his poignard; but almost instantly he flung it away from him.

"Such a vengeance would be too puny for my rage," he cried. "Let no one stir," he continued, seeing his men-at-arms springing towards Raoul; "Monsieur Sforzi belongs to me! For a hundred thousand golden crowns, I would not give up my prey! Oh, fear nothing; I will invent a chastisement that shall equal the offence."

On one of his cheeks rose, in deep red, the stigmata of shame, which had been imprinted on it; his upper lip rose and trembled convulsively, presenting an expression of implacable ferocity; his forehead—singularly and strangely like that of Raoul—was crossed and re-crossed by a network of projecting veins. For more than a minute he stood silently contemplating

his victim; at length a sinister smile passed over his lips.

"Soldiers," he said, "bind firmly this demoniac, and do not lose sight of him till you return to the château."

The first rays of dawn were touching the hill-tops, when the marquis abandoned the Château de Tauve. The aspect of desolation presented by the dwelling-place of the Dame d'Erlanges, lately so calm, smiling, and peaceful, is not to be described. It was one of those terrible pictures beyond the power of the pen to trace. A party of the marquis's men-at-arms were left to guard the house in the not very probable event of Monseigneur de Canilhac, the Lieutenant-General of Auvergne, thinking of retaking it.

It is necessary to read and re-read the authentic memoirs of the sixteenth century to believe in the odious spoliations and incredible violence committed at that epoch. But it is absolutely certain that every day the feudal nobles of provinces far removed from Paris, and consequently beyond the action of the royal power, were guilty of such crimes as that committed by the Marquis de la Tremblais.

On reaching the Château de la Tremblais, Raoul was cast into a dark, damp, and narrow dungeon. Bowed down in strength and spirit, he was oblivious of the horror of his position, however. He wept for Diane, and sighed for the repose of the grave.

While Sforzi was held captive, and the marquis was triumphant, Diane d'Erlanges, fortunately saved by Lehardy, who had conducted her to a poor goatherd's cabin, waited anxiously the return of her faithful servitor, who was gone to gather intelligence. Lehardy's absence was prolonged for several hours, and Diane, grown more and more alarmed, had decided to leave her retreat, when she perceived her brave attendant ascending the side of the mountain. She hurried down to meet him.

"Well?" she cried.

Lehardy remained silent. His cheeks were wet with tears.

Seized by a horrible presentiment, Diane stood for several seconds without daring to question him further. At length, making a great effort to control her agitation,—

"My mother?" she asked.

Lehardy bowed his head, and slowly pointed towards heaven.

"Dead!—murdered!" cried the poor girl.

"Yes, dead—murdered!" repeated Lehardy, in tones that sounded like a funeral echo.

Diane felt herself sinking to the earth, but she made a powerful effort to sustain herself; she had yet one more question to ask of Lehardy.

"Raoul?" she murmured.

"Dead, without doubt, mademoiselle. No body has survived this immense catastrophe."

The poor girl uttered a piercing shriek, and then, blindly stretching her arms before her, fell cold and inanimate to the ground. When, thanks to the care of Lehardy, she returned to consciousness, she spoke not a word. It was only at the approach of night that heaven accorded her the relief of tears, and she was at length able to reply to questions put to her by her faithful servitor.

"What must I do, mademoiselle?" he asked.

"It will be almost impossible to leave this shelter; yet it is absolutely necessary for me to go to Clermont to Monseigneur de Canilhac. The governor must do you justice. A crime so odious must not be allowed to go unpunished! But if the marquis's people meet me on the road they will kill me; and then what will become of you?"

"Lehardy," cried Diane, trying to repress the sobs which stifled her, "it is useless to address yourself to Monseigneur de Canilhac; he will only repulse your supplication with disdain. All men are monsters—tigers maddened by blood! Heaven, in its inexorable justice, will mete out punishment to these assassins! Remain near me, my faithful servant, my trusted friend; you are now my only support on earth."

"Mademoiselle," cried Lehardy, "remember that you are a D'Erlanges—noblesse oblige! You must avenge your mother. Yes, you are right. Monseigneur de Canilhac would laugh at your complaint; it is of no use addressing him; but there is a brave companion who may help you in this lamentable state of things. I do not, to speak the truth, greatly esteem this man, but his experience is equal to his cupidity, and if he finds it to his interest to serve you, he is capable of carrying the boldest actions to successful results."

"Who is this man?"

"The companion in arms of Monsieur Sforzi, Captain Roland de Maurevert. I know, besides, that the fate of brave Monsieur Raoul, whom he loved, will affect him deeply, and will dispose him to receive my proposals favorably. Lastly, mademoiselle, do not forget that if the Château de Tauve is not rendered back to you, you will see yourself reduced to poverty, which will assert neither with your name nor rank. What do you decide on, mademoiselle?"

Diane returned no answer. Since Lehardy had pronounced the name of Raoul, she had been convulsed with sobbing, and had heard nothing he had said.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE TIGER'S DEN.

It was six o'clock in the morning; the warm and brilliant rays of a bright sun lit the picturesque summits of the Mont d'Or. In the

wildest gorges of this mountain was encamped the army, daily growing in strength, called the Army of the League of Equity.

Nothing could be more strange and fantastic than the aspect of this gathering of insurgent peasants. However, among this heterogeneous and undisciplined crowd a certain order reigned, indicating at a glance the presence of a chief practically acquainted with the science of war. Advanced sentinels, supported by detached bodies, guarded the approaches to the camp, videttes stationed on the heights—all the elementary and indispensable precautions against surprise were rigorously observed.

The soldiers of the League awakened at dawn, were occupied in preparing their modest morning meal, the basis of which was chestnuts and maize. At the same time several quarters of kid and venison, cooking in the heat of ardent braziers, proved that the sobriety of the insurgents was not that of an exaggerated puritanism, and that they were far from disdaining the advantages offered by the then common practice of marauding.

A good-sized tent, surmounted by a white flag *fleur-de-lisé* stood in the middle of the camp, and was inhabited by the Generalissimo of the Army of the League of Equity, the illustrious Captain de Maurevert. The giant was at that moment seated at table before an enormous piece of venison; and in face of him, on a rough stool, sat the servitor Lehardy.

"So, captain," said the latter, "you repulse my idea of going and besieging the Château de la Tremblais?"

De Maurevert shrugged his shoulders with an air of pity, at the same moment thrusting into his mouth a piece of the venison large enough to have furnished a meal to another man.

"My poor Lehardy," he replied, "your zeal outruns your wits! How the devil do you suppose that, without artillery and with only fifteen sorry nags to mount the whole of my cavalry, I could go and besiege the strongest place in the whole province of Auvergne? You are simply demented to think of such a thing."

"But, captain, do you not fear that your inaction may prove fatal to the chevalier? Is it not a great miracle, that after being kept a prisoner for a fortnight, he is still living?"

"The truth is," said the captain, "I do every day expect to hear of my young friend's execution. I have no luck with my associates. When I do not kill them myself, some one stabs them or hangs them for me! A good fellow, Raoul—whom I loved with all my heart."

"And you are not going to make any attempt to save him, captain?"

"Not make any attempt! What do you think I have encamped here for, hardly two leagues from the Château de la Tremblais, if not to approach the chevalier? The idea of Raoul strung up on a gibbet is never out of my mind! If it were not that I have to keep up my strength, I should by this time have died—of eating and drinking! Take my word for it, friend Lehardy, that which almost always leads men to commit blunders—or, if you like better, stupidities—is precipitation. The passions or desires should never be taken for counsellors. To know how to wait for the propitious moment, and then to seize the occasion by the hair, is the great secret of life. If my brave companion in arms should be hanged, I shall be in despair, and shall do my best to avenge him; but my conscience will not reproach me. Ah, my good Lehardy, you do not know, as I do, how sweet a thing it is to be at peace with your conscience!"

At this moment a tumult which arose in the camp drew off the attention of De Maurevert.

"What now?" he cried. "Ah, it is easy to see that my soldiers are not used to being in camps! The rascals shout and dispute unceasingly, without ever, by any chance, cutting one another's throats! What a difference between them and regular troops! Three years ago, during a night-bivouac, in a company which I commanded, a furious discussion arose over a game of dice. My brave fellows took sword in hand, and for an hour fought so gently and quietly—so as not to disturb me in my sleep—that I was not even waked. Two of them were killed. What a beautiful thing discipline is! This infernal uproar drowns my voice! Women talking loudest of all! This will go on all day if I do not put a stop to it!"

De Maurevert had scarcely set foot out of his tent ere he was surrounded by a group of mountaineers, who all addressed him at once.

"Silence!" he cried, in a tone that dominated the tumult as much as the report of a cannon dominates the sound of a volley of muskets; "it is not for soldiers to question their general!" Then, turning towards one of the crowd, who appeared the least excited, he asked:

"What is the matter, companion?"

"Monseigneur, a young girl of the people was carried off last night by Monsieur de Laverdan's men, and wickedly abused. The father and mother of the poor child have come to the camp to implore your protection and justice. They demand that we should go and attack the Seigneur de Laverdan; and it really is time that we caused our sisters, daughters, and wives to be respected! Death to the Seigneur de Laverdan!"

De Maurevert's lips curled with a smile of pity.

"Companion," he said, "do not let us spoil the goodness of our cause and the justice of our demands by exaggerated pretensions. By the gallantries of Madame Venus! It would be ridiculous to attempt to prevent noblemen having passions like ourselves. The Seigneur de Laverdan may have been a little too lively in

the declaration of his love, but that is no concern of ours. What you require is that you should not be stripped of your money and reduced to poverty; that, under pretext of legal taxation, nothing should be left to you in your cupboards, neither a silver crown nor a crust of bread. Death and furies! all this commotion is absurd. What is the name of the girl so distinguished by the Seigneur de Laverdan?"

"It is our child, Jacqueline Mlehu, monseigneur," replied an old mountaineer, disengaging himself from the crowd.

De Maurevert knit his brows.

"Ah! it is Jacqueline whom the Seigneur de Laverdan has so outrageously injured!" he cried, in an altered tone. "Blood and slaughter! On second thoughts, companions, your demands appear well founded. Laverdan shall be chastised, I swear it! Let two men immediately leave the camp, and go and watch about his chateau. On their return, and after they have made their report, we will decide on what is to be done."

This determination on the part of De Maurevert, so different from the sentiments he had at first expressed, was received by the insurgents with enthusiasm. For ten minutes the camp resounded with shouts of "Long live Capitaine Maurevert! Laverdan to the gallows!"

"May I venture to ask," said Lehardy, "how, after trying to prove that the conduct of the Seigneur de Laverdan was in no way reprehensible, you have so suddenly changed your opinion, captain?"

"By Bacchus, friend Lehardy, you are very inquisitive!—but why should I not tell you the truth? The fact is, in abusing Jacqueline as he had done, the Seigneur de Laverdan has insulted me, for the girl was not unaware of the fact that I had deigned to notice her."

"So that, captain, it is for a personal injury and not for the crime he has committed you determine to take part against this seigneur?"

"Parbleu!—is it for me to trouble myself about the distress of the serfs placed under my orders? I use their animosities only to my own advantage. A De Maurevert to mix himself up seriously with such rabble!—it would be to dishonor my name for ever!"

Lehardy bowed his head and sighed.

"My answer appears to pain you," De Maurevert went on. "Speak out frankly; I promise not to take in ill part anything you may say. What makes you wince like that?"

"I am downcast at thinking, captain, that the poor people are as ill-treated by those who pretend to be their protectors and friends as by their declared persecutors. The happiness and liberty of the people, as I have often heard Monsieur Sforzi say, can never be obtained except by means of the royal authority."

"Peh!—unsound reasoning!" cried De Maurevert, shrugging his shoulders. "My poor Lehardy, philosophical policy is always an unproductive thing, and sometimes dangerous; I advise you never to have anything to do with it."

The captain was striding towards his tent, where his interrupted breakfast still awaited him, when shouts raised by the advanced sentinels and repeated by the echoes of the mountains, indicated to him that something fresh was about to occur, and he stopped. A mountaineer came hurriedly towards him, and announced that a messenger, sent by the Marquis de la Tremblais, desired to be introduced into the camp.

"At last!" muttered De Maurevert. Then, raising his voice, he said, "Let the man's eyes be bound, and then bring him to my tent."

An hour later, De Maurevert, armed from head to foot, and mounted on his battle-steed, rode out of the camp in company with Lehardy.

"Are you not afraid," said the latter, "that the marquis, violating the safe-conduct he has sent you, may proceed to any extremity against you?"

"Not in the least. De la Tremblais knows well that if he attempted anything against my liberty, he would have an ugly reckoning to settle with Messieurs de Guise! Do you imagine me mad enough to throw myself into the tiger's den without taking all due precautions? I have required of De la Tremblais that he should recognize me in his safe-conduct as attached to the house and person of Messieurs de Guise. The marquis has already too much difficult business on his hands to desire, without profit, to draw down upon himself the enmity of the house of Lorraine."

"You are right, captain. So you hope to gain the liberty of the poor chevalier? With what joy my mistress will hear of his deliverance! that happy event alone will give relief to her sorrow. Ah! you cannot imagine how much she is changed. You would not know her, she is so pale, so downcast. To see her, you would think you were looking on a saint, ready to take her flight to heaven! You will set this good and brave Sforzi free, will you not, captain?"

"I shall do my best to do so. As to succeeding, I cannot answer for it. What, after all, have I to offer to the marquis?—sermons—wit—very little. And then, if I may credit the rumors which reach me—and I put the more trust in them since they agree entirely with Raoul's character—it appears that my companion in arms has treated the marquis very rudely. That terribly complicates the affair. Parbleu!—if your mistress, the Demoiselle d'Erlanges, would lend me her aid, I should be much less embarrassed."

"My young mistress will not shrink at any sacrifice, captain, to help the chevalier. Is it not on account of his having undertaken the

defence of my late honored mistress, that Monsieur Sforzi has drawn down upon himself the marquis' hatred?"

"Certainly. But the Demoiselle d'Erlanges has been so strangely brought up. No! she would never consent to make believe to be captivated by the marquis."

"Oh, captain!" exclaimed Lehardy.

"Yes, I know. You need not say any more," interrupted De Maurevert. "Have I not myself twice already been a Huguenot? This religion stifles under a heap of prejudices a young woman's whole intelligence. A pleasant Huguenot is hardly ever to be met with—a jolly one never. So your mistress is completely smitten with the chevalier? I have long suspected as much!"

"You are entirely mistaken as to the nature of the affection felt for the chevalier by my mistress. She loves him as a brother, it is true; but—"

"That's enough!" interrupted De Maurevert. "When a young girl loves a young man like a brother who is not born of her own father and mother, it means that she is madly smitten with him! Now, draw in the bridle of your horse and follow me at ten paces distant. We are in sight of the chateau, and I must resume my rank. My familiarity with you in private is all very well, but might injure me in public!"

The Chateau de la Tremblais—one of the strongest castles in the province of Auvergne—presented an imposing aspect. It was divided into two portions of irregular form. The first, *enceinte*—and the larger—served for the dwellings of the garrison, and in time of war afforded a place of refuge for the vassals of the marquisate. This *enceinte* was surrounded by a rampart carefully constructed of hewn stone, and this rampart was flanked by eight towers, those of the principal angles being cylindrical, the others simply round.

To penetrate the first *enceinte*, a wide and deep ditch had to be crossed over a bridge, the roadway passing under a high vaulted gate, defended by a portcullis, and flanked by two large towers. Two arcades with pointed roofs, opening into the passage, were formed right and left in the thickness of the walls, and were occupied by the soldiers of the guard.

The defence had, beyond all this, multiplied obstacles, and taken the most minute precautions in the construction of the second *enceinte*, or chateau proper. This *enceinte*, much smaller than the first, and turned obliquely with reference to it, on account of the natural disposition of the ground, was separated from it by a ditch dug deeply into the living rock. It presented the form of an irregular square, at the angles of which were four cylindrical towers. A fifth tower, of colossal proportions, stood in the centre of the curtain between the two *enceintes*; it was separated from the wall by a winding road, which formed about it a sort of second ditch. Considerable buildings extended interiorly along the three other sides.

Such was the at once formidable and majestic ensemble of the Chateau de la Tremblais.

"Ah!" cried De Maurevert, with a sigh "how perfectly I understand why it is the marquis indulges certain fancies and caprices! If by any chance I found myself in his place, the devil fly away with me if, now and then, I should be able to resist the pleasure of committing some little iniquity or other!"

De Maurevert's arrival was signalled by sound of trumpet, which echoed through the battlements of the castle, and a dozen armed men came forth to meet him. He drew himself up to his full height and assumed an imposing attitude, while rapidly turning over in his mind the means he purposed to employ to obtain the release of the Chevalier Sforzi.

(To be continued.)

THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR NOT ALLOWED.

"I have been sendin' my darter Nancy to skool, and last Friday I went over to the skool to see how she was gettin' along, and I seed things I didn't like by no means. The skool-master was larnin' her things entirely out of the line of eddycation, and, as I think, improper. I set a while in the skool-house, an' heered one class say their lesson. The lesson that Nancy sed was nuthin' but the foolishlest kind of talk; the rediclist word she sed was 'I love.' I looked right at her for bein' so improper, but she went right on and sed, 'Thou lovest, and he loves.' And I reckon you never heered such rigmarole in your life—love, love, love, and nuthin' but love. She sed one time, 'I did love.' Sez I, 'Who did you love?' The skolars laffed, but I wasn't to be put off, and sed, 'Who did you love, Nancy?' The skool-master sed he would explain when Nancy had finished the lesson. This sorter pacified me, and Nancy went on with her awful love talk. It got wus and wus every word. She sed, 'I might, could, or would love.' I stopped her again, and sed I reckon I would see about that, and told her to walk out of that house. The skool-master tried to interfere, but I would not let him say a word. He sed I was a fool, and I nokit him down, and made him holler in short order. I talkt the strate thing to him. I told him I'd show how hede larn my darter grammar. I got the nabors together, and we sent him off in a hurry, and I reckon tharl be no more grammar teachin' in these parts soon."

PUZZLING.—The young ladies of a Scotch seminary are puzzled over the exact meaning of the following inscription recently discovered on the wall of the building:—"Young ladies should set good examples if they wish any one to follow them."

DO NOT SLAM THE GATE.

Now, Harry, pray don't laugh at me;
But when you go so late,
I wish you would be careful, dear,
To never slam the gate.

For Bessie listens every night,
And so does teasing Kate,
To tell me next day what o'clock
They heard you slam the gate.

'Twas nearly ten last night, you know,
But now 'tis very late—
(We've talked about so many things;)
Oh, do not slam the gate!

For all the neighbors hearing it,
Will say our future fate
We've been discussing; so I beg
You do not slam the gate!

For though it is all very true,
I wish that they would wait
To canvass our affairs—until—
Well, pray don't slam the gate.

At least, not now. But by-and-by,
When in "our home" I wait
Your coming, I shall always like
To hear you slam the gate!

For whether you go out or in,
At early hours, or late,
The whole world will not tease me then
About that horrid gate!

CHARLIE'S KISS.

BY H. L. B.

I am sure nobody who sees my placid husband now would believe that he was once one of the most jealous-tempered men in all England; and, as the way in which I cured him of his folly was very simple, I will relate the means pursued by me, for the sake of other victims to the absurd mania, be they male or female.

My parents died while I was quite an infant, leaving me to the care of my maternal grandmother, who did her best to spoil me, and was most successful in her treatment. The first eighteen years of my life were passed with few trials or troubles. My grandmother and I lived in a cottage at Brixton, the prettiest little specimen of suburban architecture imaginable, the only drawback to which was a large stone portico. Granny was very proud of this unsightly thing; I hated it, not on account of its inappropriateness, but simply because it intercepted my view of the garden-gate, so that from our sitting-room window we could not catch even a glimpse of a visitor.

Although my grandmother was rather old, she was so full of life and fond of making young people happy that I never felt dull in her society, and made her the confidant of all my little adventures; and she entered into them with all the zest of a girl.

One day the even tenor of our lives was disturbed by the arrival of an invitation from my aunt, who lived at Scarborough, asking me to spend some weeks with her. At first I refused to accept it; for this, my only other near relative, was almost a stranger to me.

"You will go, my dear Eva, to oblige me," said Granny, coaxingly; "I want to have the cottage thoroughly done up, inside and out, and this will be an excellent opportunity."

I went, spent three months very delightfully at Scarborough, and returned home, leaving my heart in the safe keeping of Claude Anderson. I loved him very dearly; but a certain fear which I felt for him, prevented that perfect love which would have made me quite happy. During the month we were engaged, before I left the North, scarcely a day passed without one or more little "snarls" taking place between us. I know the word I have used is a vulgar one, but no other will answer my purpose, seeing that Claude and I did not positively quarrel.

There were a great many nice young men and lads in and out of my aunt's house all day long; for she was most kind and hospitable, besides being the mother of six very pretty daughters. These male bipeds were constant sources of jealousy on the part of Claude, who in all other respects was sensible, clever, and I might almost say perfect.

I was unusually full of health and spirits, also (he himself told me) very pretty and charming; so A brought me a bouquet of roses, B a box of preserved fruits, C a pug puppy; in fact, the whole alphabet, assisted by my six female cousins, conspired with me to tease poor jealous Claude, until positively I believe he felt glad when he put me into the train, and sent me back to London with a gold guard-ring on my finger and a doubting, aching heart.

Of course, when I reached home, all my doubts and fears were confided to dear Granny's sympathising ears. She listened to my tale of love and woe; then said—

"He must be cured of this folly before you become his wife, my darling."

A week after my return home came a letter from Claude, telling me that he had received a very lucrative Government appointment in London, and was now in a position to ask for Granny's consent to our early marriage.

He came, and made himself so agreeable (there were no "letters of the alphabet" to tease him), that Granny thought I had exaggerated

his weakness; but she was soon convinced of her error.

One afternoon Claude came as usual; business had gone wrong with him, and he was rather cross. Grandmother went upstairs for her afternoon nap, and Claude began to read aloud to me—a most unfortunate proceeding on his part, for it happened that I was obliged to listen for the street-door bell, and wished to conceal the fact from my companion.

I never did care much for poetry, but that day I quite abhorred it. In the midst of a sentimental piece which Claude was reading most beautifully, "ting, ting" went the bell; up I jumped, and with a muttered "Excuse me" left the room.

The same interruption happened again, and a third time. I became so nervous that I left the sitting-room door open, and this was the unlucky speech which met the ears of my offended companion—

"Don't, Charlie dear! Leave me alone, sir; I will not allow you to kiss me, although I am very fond of you."

Here followed a scuffle and some suppressed laughter.

When I returned to the sitting-room, Claude stood looking the very picture of indignation.

"Pray may I ask you 'Charlie dear' is? Probably 'only a boy,'" said he, satirically.

"No, he is not a boy," I answered, with a careless laugh—this "only a boy" was a sneering allusion to a lad of sixteen of whom Claude had once been jealous, and to whom I had justly applied the term.

"Then, I must insist upon knowing what man dared to attempt to kiss you," exclaimed Claude, fiercely.

"Would you like to see him?" I asked, tauntingly. And then we had a sharp quarrel, which terminated in his saying—

"Eva Raynham, I give you twenty-four hours to consider whether you will tell me the name of the impertinent rascal whom you permitted to take such a liberty without properly resenting it. If to-morrow night you persist in obstinate refusal, we must part then and for ever. I can pardon frivolity, but not deceit."

I covered my face with my hand, and said in a low tone, "I cannot."

In a moment he dashed out of the room, and left the house, banging the street door so violently that Granny ran down alarmed for the plate basket, and found me—laughing immoderately.

The next evening came, and with it Claude, looking so pale and wretched that I quite pitied him. Immediately on his arrival Granny left us alone, and for a few minutes silence followed, which was broken by his saying in a most severe tone—

"Have you made up your mind to tell the truth, Eva, or to make us both miserable for life?"

"I am not miserable; nor would you be, if you were not such a foolish dolt," I answered.

"Heartless coquette!" he began, when a ring at the bell caused me to leave the room hastily, for it was Charlie come again. Of course I expected Claude to follow me—but he was not mean, dear fellow!

Very soon I returned, followed by Charlie on all fours. Yes, the offender was only a large fat terrier, blind of one eye, and old enough, even had he been a biped, not to awaken jealousy in Claude's breast.

Never shall I forget the expression of humiliation on poor Claude's face at the discovery of his unknown rival. The cure was more than half completed, and dear Granny finished it, for she preached such a beautiful little sermon about the folly of jealousy, that it made me cry, and Claude's voice was quite husky when next he spoke.

After it was all made up, and matters were pleasant again, I said—

"Now, Claude, I will tell you why the bell had such a disturbing effect upon me yesterday. Our only domestic had gone out for the afternoon, and I, from a weak-minded pride, wished to conceal the reduced condition of our establishment from you. First came the baker, then the postman, and, finally, the milkwoman, who is a great friend of mine, and sole proprietress of the offending Charlie. I am very fond of the poor old dog, but could never allow either him or any other animal to lick my face; hence the expostulation on my part, and our recent quarrel, which has ended so satisfactorily."

Claude looked at the matter so good-naturedly, and owned his folly with such unflinching candour, that I determined never again to flirt or tease him, and I have kept my resolution, with one exception. Sometimes I say "bow-wow" to him, and to this very hour it makes him gnaw his moustache with impatience, for he is thus led to call to mind the—to me—somewhat droll incident of Charlie's Kiss.

A country clergyman of middle age, unquestionable antecedents, and professional appearance, found himself in a railway carriage with two maiden ladies, long past the bloom of youth. There were no lamps in the carriage, and the ladies appeared very apprehensive in the matter of tunnels. At length the train plunged into darkness, when the clerical passenger was horrified to find that one of his fellow-travellers suddenly turned a bull's-eye lantern upon him. "You will excuse us," said the female with the bull's-eye, "but, although you appear to be very respectable, still there are so many wolves in sheep's clothing going about that, whenever we get into tunnels, we prepare for the worst." The terrified parson left the carriage at the first opportunity.

"YOU MUST KNOW BANKS!"

My wife and I resolved to retire from the perplexities and publicity of a town life into the innocent ease and obscurity of a country village; and having made up our minds to the move, we tried to settle the whereabouts. After answering a hundred advertisements of small and singularly unobjectionable houses, and visiting some fifty of them, we fixed on one on the outskirts of the large village of Sefton. We imagined ourselves scientific, so we made our choice with a view to ferns, aquariums, flowers, mosses, and other roots of experimental philosophy. Of course our new neighbors looked on us as over-learned, seeing these symptoms of abstruseness, and complimented us by declaring we had quite a museum indoors and horticultural gardens out. We had not succeeded in obtaining much celebrity before, but we soon became even more celebrated than we desired.

As one neighbor called after another, and all were introduced to our curiosities, natural and artificial, the general cry was, "O, you should know Banks! You must know Banks!"

"Who is Banks?" we ask.

"Such a clever man! quite a genius. Has been all over the world, and knows everything. Lives alone in that lovely place the other side of the village, and has the most beautiful garden and fernery in the county."

"What is he like?" asks my wife, interested.

"Well, like clever people generally. Careless of his appearance, and peculiar-looking."

"Humph!" say I, glancing at my wife to see how she will take this; for, between ourselves, she considers herself clever, and is especially particular in her dress, and is anything but peculiar-looking.

"That theory was exploded when Hannah More died. Clever people are no longer peculiar," she says satirically.

"Everybody is clever nowadays," I remark sententiously.

At the end of each day, as our last visitor departed, my wife would say:

"How strange that Banks has not called! We must know Banks."

We are naturally fond of society, and were soon admitted into the various coteries of the village and its neighborhood. We went to dinners, afternoon teas, suppers, wherever we were invited, and soon became quite popular people; but we never met Banks. Either he was not at home or he had excused himself on this plea or that; or he had not been invited, for "it was no good to invite him; he always declined."

Even in this seventh heaven of country love and peace there was bitterness, and my wife's happiness was alloyed because she could not "know Banks."

"If they would not din his name into my ears for ever, I should be indifferent," she said; "but we really must make his acquaintance."

"We have no daughters to marry, so why are you so anxious about a bachelor?" I ask beginning to feel jealous.

"He is evidently the only person in the place worth knowing," she replies. "Besides, he gives to everything. I see his name down for every charity, and I want to ask for a subscription to my pet Dorcas."

"Write him a polite note in the third person."

"I will; then we must know Banks."

The sentence had become a proverb and joke between us.

My wife wrote, and in a week or so received a note and five pounds, with Mr. Banks' compliments. She composed so elaborate an acknowledgment that I accused her of writing a love-letter, and getting fast in her old age. I got a good snubbing in return.

We were celebrated for our little dinners; but even they were not as charming as they used to be for lack of this unattainable element, and I now grew anxious to secure it. We passed and repassed his house—paused to look at his profusion of flowers and ferns—sought for him at church, where, we were told, he was to be seen twice each Sunday, but failed to see him. Once we were walking with a friend, who exclaimed suddenly, "There is Banks! I want to speak to him;" and we perceived a tallish man in the distance, whose only remarkable feature was a wide-awake. On another occasion, a young lady was with us, and she said with a blush and simper, "Here is Mr. Banks!" as somebody passed rapidly and raised his hat.

"He is nothing particular after all," said my wife, glancing back.

"O, he is charming! Don't you know Mr. Banks?" said the young lady.

One day, however, when we were near his house, we saw a man working in the garden. My wife said impulsively:

"There is the gardener! I must ask him for a bit of that curious fern."

She started across the road, and I followed humbly, as I am always compelled to do. I hear her make her requests in her most gracious and bland manner, and see the gardener turn and approach the railing.

"You have such a lovely garden. It does you so much honor," she says, while I examine the man.

"Will you walk in and look at it, and make choice of any specimens you fancy?" he said politely, but nervously, and with a slight impediment in his speech.

He went towards a small gate leading into a shrubbery at the bottom of the garden, my wife skirting the railing in the same direction, and I following with a chuckle. "Now we shall know Banks."

"You may be sure he is not at home, or we should not be asked in," said she.

I always say that it is no wonder I am jealous, for my wife's manner is certainly frightfully attractive. It was quite as courteous to her gardener as it could have been to the enviable Banks himself.

"So much obliged to you. This is quite a paradise," she says, passing through the gate held open by the gardener, and adding carelessly, "I suppose Mr. Banks is not at home?"

"I am Mr. Banks," was the curt reply.

Thus, at last, we knew Banks! My wife was confused for a moment, during which brief period I came to the rescue, with—

"You must excuse our intrusion; for having heard of your choice ferns, we could no more resist their attraction than a moth a candle's. My wife is the most resolute specimen-hunter in the world."

"And we have heard so much of you and your treasures that we have been dying to be acquainted with you ever since we have been here," said that lady, recovering herself.

"I intended to do myself the pleasure," began Banks, and paused.

"We have hoped and despaired so long that we have anticipated you," said my wife, laughing, and venturing to look at Banks for the first time.

He was a man of about forty, or perhaps less, young and yet old looking—with that expression of mingled reserve, sweetness, and melancholy which women call "interesting." He had a broad forehead, well lined either with thought or care, and deep-set, expressive grey eyes. They were rather like my wife's, and I perceived that when they glanced at one another, a sort of understanding, one might almost say mesmeric sympathy, passed from one to the other.

We were soon all three engaged in conversation on topics of mutual interest. He had not been overrated, and was certainly an agreeable, clever, and in some sort scientific man. He showed us his garden, which was laid out with great taste, and which he said he cultivated mainly himself; his fernery, containing every specimen of fern capable of bearing the English climate, and a rockery covered with various species of parasitical plants, mosses, and lichens that must have cost him years of labor to collect and make flourish. But what pleased my wife and me most, in spite of our scientific proclivities, was a dell outside the garden, which held a rustic seat, and through which a tiny rivulet ran. Here was every wild-flower that bounteous spring lavishes on ungrateful man, and every bird that sings in England's air. Crumbs were visible, for which Mr. Banks excused himself by saying that he had got into the habit of strewing them in winter, and continued it all the year round.

"The nightingale favours me sometimes," he said, "and some of the birds are quite tame."

As if in proof of his assertion, a thrush burst into song so near us that I turned in surprise, and saw the bird so close that I could have caught it. I was, in effect, about to make the attempt; but Banks arrested me, saying quietly,

"I never molest them, and I have educated Flush to respect their privileges."

He pointed to a shaggy terrier, following close at his heels.

"That was Mrs. Browning's dog!" said my wife, who was a devoted lover of that great poetess.

"Yes. I named this dear friend after him. Mrs. Browning understood that a dog was truly one's fastest friend. My Flush, like hers, has

"Watched within a curtained room,
Where no sunbeam brake the gloom,
Round the sick and dreary."

At the sound of his name, Flush sprang upon his master, and licked his hand, while I remarked that Mrs. Browning's letters to Mr. Wedgewood concerning Flush were almost more delightfully earnest than her poem.

As we could not remain in this enchanted land for ever, we prepared to leave it. My wife's hands, and arms even, were filled with floricultural treasures, so that she might easily have bowed herself off; but shake hands she would and did; so we all parted more as friends than strangers.

We expected a visit from Banks the next day—at least my wife did—but we were disappointed. The week passed, and he did not come.

"Your fascinations have failed for once," I say.

"I shall send him that lycopodium he was asking about, and then he must come," she replies.

"We will know Banks!" I cry suspiciously.

The lycopodium went, and a note of thanks was returned; still he did not call. But he waylaid us as we again passed his house—we always were passing his house—and graciously acknowledged the gift. Down came a quick, patting, unexpected April shower, and we had no umbrella. Politeness compelled him to offer shelter, and we went into his house.

"Well, we have succeeded at last, Mr. Banks," I say, when we are happily engaged in surveying his small aquarium and vaunting our own; Flush was at his side.

He looks inquisitive, my wife reproachful, for she knows me, and expects something disagreeable; but I continue provokingly.

"You will not come to the mountain, so the mountain has forced itself upon you. My wife thinks you the only person worth knowing in Sefton, and, woman-like, she has made your acquaintance."

I believed they both blushed, as he muttered

something about "too much honor." I know my wife looked indignantly at me.

"Will you waive ceremony and dine with us to-morrow?" I continue. "We have many pursuits in common, and we have some things that may interest you. We shall be quite alone, and have not even a marriageable daughter."

He smiled, and his smile was winning. I was conscious of being better dressed, even better looking, but I could not boast of such a smile as that; and I glanced at my wife to see if she had observed it. Of course she had, for nothing ever escapes her.

"I go little into society; but I shall be very happy," he said, to my great surprise and my wife's undisguised delight.

She had compassed her end at last, and we should know Banks! No sooner did we reach home than she began preparations for the *petit dîner* of the morrow.

"You never took half so much trouble for me!" I grumble.

"You were never half so interesting," she retorts.

Well, we triumphed in having Banks all to ourselves. We were *trois têtes dans un bonnet*; for as soon as he overcame a slight shyness at finding himself reversing the etiquette of society, he interred into all our pet theories with evident interest. He was a delightful companion; and I regarded my wife's pleasure in securing him with my usual cynical jealousy. I must not forget to say that he was accompanied by Flush, for whose presence he apologised by the assurance that they were inseparable.

By degrees we also grew to be nearly inseparable; that is to say, my wife tamed him so judiciously, that he came to us whenever he liked, and our intimacy gradually ripened into friendship. We discovered that he had been a great traveller; an extensive reader; a wandering philanthropist; but of his private history we could glean nothing. He was known to be of good family and ample means, and there was no ascertained blight on his name or fame; but he lived alone, and seemed to have few personal friends. He was, however, a good deal from home, and my wife had no doubt but that he went to visit his relations.

As she was the most consummate and determined of match-makers, my jealousy was excited because she did not propose to find a wife for Banks. I mooted the subject cautiously one day, when she assured me she had been thinking of it, but that she intended him to supply my place when kindly Nature had finished her work with me.

"I am the tougher of the two," I say grimly.

"Well, I have considered that side of the question also," she replied reflectively; "so I mean to keep you both as long as I can, and be consoled by the survivor when one shall depart."

"What if you should go first?" I ask. "Then it will be for me to look out, and I shall at once propose for Addy."

"Addy would no more have you than the Great Mogul; but she would just suit Banks," says my wife reflectively. "Let us ask her to come."

"With all my heart; but you know she will see no one but ourselves," I reply.

"That will suit very well; for then you and she can amuse one another, and I will improve the occasion with Banks. We do know Banks."

My wife always acts on the spur of the moment; for, like her sex generally, she is what has been delicately called "a creature of impulse." She wrote her invitation at once, talking to me the whole time.

"It will be rich fun to try and bring them together. He declines to meet our friends; she has given up society since her husband's death. I should have consoled myself long ago, for he was no better than a mummy or a jelly-fish! But I could not change my name for Banks! Adelaide Percy could never become Adelaide Banks!"

"I thought you intended us to remain as we are, until you could marry Banks, and I Addy," I suggest.

"I don't quite understand your position," she remarks, signing her name in letters that filled a line.

Neither did I; but I suggested that we should be like the Kilkenny cats; a story that puzzled me when I was young, and puzzles me still.

The Adelaide Percy to whom this suddenly-improvised invitation was sent was the widow of Marmaduke Percy, Esq., M. P. for—shire. We had been on a visit to her just before we had the happiness first "to know Banks," and shortly after her husband's death. Why she had married old Percy, and why she grieved for him now that he had been so considerate as to leave her rich, handsome, and still sufficiently young, nobody could guess; except, perhaps, my wife, who made even broader "Guesses at Truth" than the admirable brothers Hare. She said that she was convinced Addy had been forced into the match; for had she not been her schoolfellow and bosom friend, and did she not know that she would never have married an old man if she could have helped it? What girl would?

Be this as it may, we had found Mrs. Percy a highly prosperous, but somewhat reserved and sobered lady. Her handsome country-house was well appointed, and all her domestics appeared much devoted to her. We heard and saw that she was a good mistress and judicious friend to the poor neighbors who surrounded her. Really a friend, and not an inquisitor, as some ladies are reported to be who make a profession of the poor. But she saw no society, beyond the ordinary morning callers who performed their daily duty-rounds in their various

vehicles; and but for innate good-breeding, she would not have seen these. Still, we had a delightful time with her, for she was well-read, and had travelled before her marriage, making the most of her opportunities; moreover, she cleared us to all places where we fancied our coveted specimens might be obtained.

My wife, whose curiosity is as remarkable as her match-making and impulsive, learnt from one and another of her people, that she had been a devoted wife to the most fish and tiresome of husbands; nursing him, through illness and still worse irritability, with unswerving patience and sweetness; but she also learnt that she had never been either more cheerful or less reserved than we found her.

"A model woman!" I exclaimed. "Calm, sober, reticent!"

"Tiresome! I hate people from whom one cannot pump up a secret; and Addy won't tell even me what has changed her so!" said my wife, pressing a finger to her lips as if she was about to dry.

"Perhaps it was that railway accident abroad, in which her only brother was killed," I suggested, examining a piece of moss.

"More likely a tiresome husband. Nothing depresses the spirits like a husband," she replied demurely.

"Yours are lively enough," I rejoined. "That speaks well for me."

We remained a month with Addy, and left her much as we found her; grave, thoughtful, and reserved, but truly affectionate and warm-hearted.

My wife seemed unable to exist through the two days that intervened between her invitation, and Addy's answer. Happily for me, Addy was tractable, and promised to come, provided she were not expected to see people.

"Banks cannot be called people. She must know Banks!" says my most-unyielding of wives, pulling my hair with delight.

"You will get into hot water between them, like that leaf you are skeletoning," say I ungrammatically, if scientifically.

Addy arrived; and whether it was change of air, or the sense of once more visiting old friends, she greeted us cheerfully, and with evident pleasure. Her pale cheeks flushed, and her handsome eyes glowed, as my wife welcomed her with all the effusion of a school-girl.

"You are quite alone; you will have no company?" were amongst her first questions.

"One cannot be said to be alone, when one is two; and everybody knows three are no company," said my wife evasively.

Banks was invited for the very next day, also under the impression that we were alone; but, as my wife insisted again, "three's is no company."

We were getting through the twilight ten minutes before dinner, when a distant but shrill bark announced Flush. Addy was almost animated at that moment; but my wife looked at me doubtfully.

"O, Addy, I am so sorry! I verily believe this is a tame friend of ours and his dog. We must ask him to dinner; indeed, I darest he has come on purpose; for he has *carte blanche* here, and I forgot to give him *carte noire* on your account," said my wife, with shameless effrontery.

Addy seemed about to escape, when Banks entered unannounced.

"Only an old friend and schoolfellow of mine," whispered my wife as she rose to meet him, and muttered some sort of inaudible introduction.

He was taken in, but was too much of a gentleman to run away; so he seated himself near my wife, and began to talk at one end of our good-sized drawing-room, while I engaged Addy in conversation at the other. She was seated with her back to the conservatory, and her tall elegant figure was half in light, half in shadow. Her low voice must have been inaudible to our companions; but the echo of theirs reached us. Just as dinner was announced, she said hastily:

"Who is he?"

And I replied, as I offered my arm:

"O, don't you know Banks? I thought everybody knew Banks."

When our *partie quarrée* was formed, and I was mentally rubbing my hands at my gustatory prospects, I glanced at our guests to see how they had taken this infringement of our compact. Addy was gazing at her empty plate as if it were a mesmerist, and she a hapless medium. She was pale and motionless, and the color had gone from her lips. I could not have believed that the presence of a stranger could have produced such an effect, and began to think there was some obstinacy of temper at the bottom of her misanthropy. I looked from her to Banks. He was talking to my wife, and bowling out soup for her; looking rather "put out," it must be confessed.

"Do have some soup, Addy? You eat nothing," said that diplomatist, as Addy shook her head at our neat parlor-maid.

"Some fish, then? You are ill, dear?" she added, seeing how pale our guest was.

"No, no. Pray, don't," said Addy, casting an incomprehensible glance of entreaty at my wife, and gulping down a large glass of water.

Banks started, dropped the soup-plate, and looked at his *vis-à-vis* for the first time. I shall never forget his face as he saw that grand profile; for Addy was as handsome as a Cleopatra.

"Can this be love at first sight?" I asked myself.

His face grew crimson; his brows met as with an angry frown; his deep eyes flashed; and he half rose, as if about to leave the dinner-table. Flush rose also, with an inquiring bark; but, putting him down almost roughly, he recovered himself, and said, in a low hoarse voice:

"I have had the honor of meeting Mrs. Percy before."

Addy, in turning her imploring eyes from my wife, had encountered those of Banks. She was red enough now, and there was an expression in her face of a pain so intense that my wife was alarmed. She made a slight movement, nevertheless, in return for a formal bow of grim civility from Banks; but her eyes again returned to the mesmeric plate, and her face to its rigid pallor. I could not resist a malicious glance at my wife, who was, I perceived, ashamed of her management. She was not to be beat, however. She dashed at once into her pet subjects, and engaged Banks in conversation on them, appealing now and then to Addy to confirm facts relative to the Flora of her neighborhood, or some foreign incident. Addy replied in monosyllables; but I had never heard Banks so eloquent or agreeable. He and my wife kept up the conversational ball between them—tossing it from gardens to museums, from museums to picture-galleries, and finally letting it fall in Italy. I had time fully to enjoy my *petit diner*; for not a word could I get from Addy, and not one could I thrust in between this collision of tongues. Only once, when my wife suddenly mentioned Milan, did I remark any other sign of acquaintanceship between our friends. They appear to look at one another involuntarily, but only for a moment; the mesmeric plate and my mesmeric wife drew them apart again irresistibly.

I never passed so uncomfortable a dinner. It was worse than cold soup and ill-cooked venison; but it was over at last, and the ladies withdrew. If women are hyper-inquisitive, men are rationally inquisitive. I felt a reasonable curiosity concerning the previous meetings of Banks and Addy, so I put the former a few delicate questions:

"Strange that you two should have met before. How, when, and where?"

I thought my facetious introduction of this interesting game would excite a smile; but it produced a frown.

"In Italy—years ago. What excellent wine!" was the response.

"You do not appear to be well acquainted; but I hope you will improve on your slight intimacy while Mrs. Percy stays with us," I continued. "She is one of the most amiable and accomplished women I know, and I am sure you would like her."

"I scarcely think I should. I do not care for female society," he replied; and I could get no more out of him.

We found the ladies even more silent than we had been, and they did not, as is their rule, brighten up when we appeared. But Banks grew exceedingly lively, and was so devoted to my wife, that I remarked aside to Addy that I began to feel jealous. It was strange how he lingered on—strange how he looked from time to time at immovable Addy, who sat with her elbow on the table, shrouding her face with a white hand, on which was the ring which had bound her to old Percy, and no other. She had left off her weeds, and was only in slight mourning—something black and white I remember it was, which became her wonderfully.

When at last he and Flush rose to go, she rose also; and when he had wished my wife and me good-night, and was about to make her a distant bow, she walked towards him and held out her hand. The action must have been premeditated, for it had the calm dignity of a certain thoughtfulness, which was touching even to the bystanders, and overpowering to him who took the hand, held it a moment, then let it go without speaking.

What did it all mean? I resolved to find out with my rational inquisitiveness, my wife having failed with her hyper-inquisitiveness.

"And you have had the advantage of us all these years, Addy?" I said; "you do know Banks?"

"Yes," said Addy, with a large tear in her eye.

"Do tell us all about it; we are dying to know."

"I met Mr. Banks abroad at the saddest time of my whole life," said Addy, in the same calm premeditated sort of way as the previous outpouring of her hand. "His mother and my brother were killed by that frightful railway accident at Milan, and he and I were left alone. He was very good to me. Do not ask me any more, dear, dear friends."

She sat down and burst into tears. It was our last attempt at curiosity, for we knew that the frightful catastrophe which had caused the death of a brother she loved with all her heart had been the precursor of a long illness and brain-fever. We had heard that she was alone at the time, and that, until her parents reached her, she had been indebted to strangers for care and aid. Still we could not account for her peculiar kind of emotion on meeting Banks, or for his strange manner.

"There is something under the rose," said my wife.

"Your match-making may as well be stowed away with it," quoth I.

"On the contrary, I shall invite Banks again every day and all day," said she.

But the following morning we ascertained that our restless friend had left home for an indefinite period, and his servants did not know where he was gone. It was my wife's pleasure that Addy should not be told this, and we prevailed on her to remain with us longer than she intended. Her manner grew fitful and excitable, and my wife declared that she started at every sound, and turned red and pale at every bell. I began to hint that she was not, after all, the piece of calm perfection I had imagined, but a

mere woman, and my wife required to know what I could desire better.

More than a month passed thus, when we were suddenly informed that an old and favorite horse belonging to Banks was ill, and that he had been telegraphed for, and had returned immediately. He had often told us that he had two faithful friends, his horse and dog.

"We must go and see after him," said my wife. "If that stupid old horse dies, he will shoot himself, and leave orders that they shall be buried together. Addy, there are marvellous recipes for moribund quadrupeds in that huge folio over the dining-room window. Look them out while we are away. Chivers will bring you the steps; but take care you don't break your neck, or we shall have to add you to the hecatomb."

Addy was struggling with some emotion, but turned upon this into my piece of calm perfection again.

We found Banks in the stable in the utmost distress. The horse was apparently dying.

"How kind of you!" he said, wringing my hand.

"My father had a horse just in this state, and one of those old recipes cured him," said my sagacious wife.

"Where is it? How can I get it?" asked Banks. "May I go with you and procure it, and have it made up at the chemist's at once?"

He had great faith in my wife's judgment; so we all hurried off together, leaving the horse to the groom and farrier. He outstrode us in his excitement, and was in the hall while we were barely on the threshold. Addy came out of the dining-room, breathless, exclaiming: "I have found them. How is he—how is the horse?"

They met face to face, and we heard him say: "Good heavens! Adelaide again!" as he strove to hurry past her.

"O, this is cruel! let us be friends!" she cried desperately.

"Friends! with one who has been the ruin of my life!—never! I have but one friend, and he lies dying," he said in a low hoarse voice.

Flush understood him, and barked a sharp protest.

"Ay, I forgot my poor Flush," he added, stooping over the dog, whose large eyes looked as reproachful as Adelaide's.

She hastened up-stairs as he entered the hall, with the words, "Hard! unforgiving!" on her lips.

We found the folio open at the recipes, and two or three copied out in her clear large handwriting. My wife selected one, and gave it to Banks, who crumpled it up in his hand, but hurried with it to the chemist's. I accompanied him, and my wife ran up to Adelaide.

She recounted the scene to me afterwards, and I said it should be dramatised as sensational, thereby giving great offence.

She found Addy on her knees, in an agony of weeping, her face buried in her bed, her arms outstretched over it. My calm piece of perfection! What anomalies these women are! Of course my wife threw her arms about her, mingled her tears, and so forth, calming her by degrees. I can just imagine the stately Addy, encircled by my blonde, impulsive, satirical little wife, and the diverse feeling of the pair. But violent emotion sometimes produces confidence, and Addy's ended in a pasmic relation of some passages of her history connected with Banks.

It appeared that she and her brother were travelling in Italy at the same time that Banks and his mother were, and that they made a casual acquaintance as they met occasionally at different places. They chanced to be all in the same train at the time of a fearful railway collision, which caused the death of many passengers. Poor Addy was frantically calling on a dead brother, when Banks came to her, himself in the terrible agony of the sudden consciousness that a mother, whom he devotedly loved, was also killed. He promised to find her brother if she would but consent to withdraw from the horrible scene, and she, injured herself, fainted at his side. He carried her away, and gave her into the charge of some of the people who had gathered to the spot, while he returned to watch for the dead.

When she recovered consciousness, she found herself in a small railway station, surrounded by strangers. She tried to rush back to the scene of the accident, but she could not; for, although not seriously injured, she was unable to move. Carriages came from Milan in course of time, and Banks returned to her, and carried her to one, into which he also got. He had previously seen the dead bodies of those they each loved best conveyed towards that city. Even I cannot think without intense pain of that journey; what must they have felt? My impression is, that they must have been attracted to each other before this time, and that they therefore found some consolation in a growing mutual attachment; but Addy owned to no such feelings; she only spoke of the tender, respectful, unselfish sympathy of him afflicted like herself.

When they reached an hotel at Milan, he confided her to the care of the landlady, having previously ascertained the address of her parents; then he gave way to his own grief.

Some time elapsed before her parents arrived, during part of which their dead were buried side by side in a cemetery at Milan, and she was delicious. She got better, however, and would leave her bed and go into a room where she could see and thank Banks. It is pretty evident that she must have loved him ere this. How could she have helped it? Still, she did not confess to it.

Her father and mother arrived at last. My wife knew them well, and disliked them par-

ticularly. They were narrow-minded, ambitious people, whose one object in life seemed to be to amass money for their only son, and to make a grand match for their daughter. However, Addy only said that Mr. Banks did his best to console them for their loss, and to amuse them while she continued ill.

I take it for granted that the upshot of it all was, that the young people fell over head and ears in love. It was apparent from Addy's disjointed account that Banks did not leave Milan until she did, and that they must have understood one another. She particularised their last meeting as having taken place in the cemetery where he had buried their beloved dead. She had resolved to see it; and he had taken her thither. My wife gathered with difficulty that a promise or engagement of some sort passed between them over the graves, on which they left emblematic flowers, and that love sprang out of death.

I am not sentimental; but even my imagination grows vivid when calling up the scene—the grief and beauty of Addy; the intensity of feeling of her remarkable lover; the cemetery; the deep blue of the Italian sky.

We could not discover whether Addy's parents were asked, and refused consent, at Milan; but it evolved that they left that place for England, while Banks pursued his travels alone. At any rate, he held the promise sacred; and so, doubtless, did Addy, until she had to endure the persecution of her father and mother. This, at least, was my indignant wife's version of the story, who knew those worthies, and declared that they had forced Addy into a marriage with old Percy about two years after her brother's death.

While these disclosures were being dragged to light at our house, I was nursing Banks' old horse in his stables with him. The potion, or mash, or whatever it might be called, had such wonderful effect—probably because Addy had turned out the recipe—that, to my unspeakable relief, the excellent quadruped revived, and his master's joy and gratitude were so great that I thought he would have kissed us both, as well as the doctor and groom. He certainly did embrace the horse, whose name I afterwards discovered to be Milan—the groom having been wont to call him *Millum*; with a sort of interrogative doubt, as if ill informed of the orthography.

Banks accompanied me homewards, and was still pouring out his thanks when we met my wife. She greeted us with—

"We were so anxious about the horse that we could not rest. Addy was even more fussy than I; but I see, by your faces, that her recipe has been successful."

Banks stammered out something, while my wife came between us, and went on addressing him carelessly.

"I think you said that you met Mrs. Percy abroad?"

"Yes."

"Before her marriage?"

"Yes."

A pause; and I break in with, "She was wonderfully handsome."

"Was? Is, you mean. You men never think a woman good-looking after thirty-five," cries my wife.

"I should not dare to say that in your presence," I reply.

Banks smiled.

"It was too bad of them to marry her up to that old Percy," she continued.

"Them? Whom?" asked Banks involuntarily.

"Her parents. They were arbitrary and ambitious; and she was sacrificed, like the rest of us," she replied bowing to me.

"And he was got rid of, like the rest of us," I said, returning the mock salute.

Banks's face was aflame. I never saw any fellow change countenance so often in so short a space of time. At last he said grimly,

"No woman ever marries against her will."

"I am sure I did, and you know what a victim I am," said my wife; and he smiled again. "You will come to dinner," she continued. "I have a new moss, and my husband has made a discovery quite Darwinian."

"Not to-day—quite impossible," he said hurrying off.

"We shall expect you," she cried, waving her hand.

It was nearly dinner-time when we got back, and we found Addy ready. She was calm; but the marks of her late emotion were visible enough. She told us that she had made arrangements to leave us the following morning, and that her maid was packing-up. We combated this resolution in vain.

We were late for dinner, and I hurried Addy off, saying to my wife, "It is no good to wait."

"Provoking man!" she exclaimed.

"Who? which?" I asked.

"Both! every man I ever saw!" she replied.

We had begun, when there was a sharp bark and ring, and Banks actually appeared. He had dressed hastily, yet with even more than the French "four pins" of care.

"I could not resist the new moss and the Darwinian discovery," he said, glancing at Addy, and bowing nervously.

She made no movement, but looked at my wife reproachfully. She was, however, resolved to hide all emotion, and began to talk as naturally as she could. By degrees the conversation became sufficiently easy, and my hopes of a quiet dinner—faint, at first—were realised. I had not, at that time, heard Addy's story, so I hazarded a remark at dessert which savored more of the hyper-inquisitive than the prudent.

"So odd you two should have met abroad. Were you long acquainted?"

I watched the effects of this venture. Addy's cheeks were crimson, and Banks's eyes flashed as he saw it.

"We met, as people do on the Continent, by chance; and parted by chance also, I suppose," he said nonchalantly. "You remember our last encounter?"

A sudden pain must have struck at his heart, for his face turned deadly pale. He had said more than he intended.

"Yes, I remember," said Addy, with an entreating glance at my wife, who moved to leave the room.

When they were gone, Banks fell into a reverie, and I maliciously interrupted it, saying,

"You do not know what an intolerable match-maker my wife is. I am charmed to see her circumvented for once. She was bent on bringing you together, and you hate one another beforehand. It surprises me; for Addy is generally much beloved, and you are not altogether odious."

"Did she—did Adelaide—did Mrs. Percy say she hated me?" he asked impetuously.

"Not in so many words; but her manner implies it much as yours does."

He smiled sadly, and said his manner was terribly awkward.

Addy played and sang well—divinely, my wife said; who uses exaggerated terms, like the rest of her sex—so when we were again assembled, we asked her for some music. She consented at once, as she always does; for she is neither nervous nor silly. I know I am terribly provoking, as my wife says; but I can no more help it than another man can help being amiable, so when Addy asked me what I should like, I said,

"Moore's melodies are all the fashion again, Banks, and I rejoice, for I like the old songs. Mrs. Percy sings them so well. Let us have the one with the doubtful simile of the sunflower, Addy. You know which I mean. 'The heart that has truly loved never forgets'; though I have watched a hundred sunflowers, and never yet seen one 'turn to her god when he sets.'"

"Nor have I," said Banks, watching Addy's tremulous fingers as they tried to strike the first chords.

She sang the desired song with difficulty, but perfect sweetness and expression. Towards the end her voice trembled slightly, but she commanded it.

"Did you ever hear her sing before?" I asked of Banks.

"Never," he replied, moving his chair so that we could not see his face.

Addy had what is called a sympathetic voice, and I was sure that it had reached his heart. When she ended, and was about to rise, my wife detained her at the piano.

"Why do poets invent fables to rouse our feelings?" said Banks hoarsely. "You sing a song in which you cannot believe."

"I am not answerable for my songs; yet I believe in this one, in spite of the sunflower," said Addy, half sadly, half lightly, beginning another at our request.

"That strain again; it had a dying fall," we all said, or implied, by our significant silence, as she sang song after song.

Banks spoke never a word; but he quietly drew nearer and nearer the piano, until he was close to Addy. Was she conscious of the proximity? She gave no sign save in the tremolo of that *voce simpatico*; and that might have been according to the modern school of singing, which is a perpetual roulade.

However, it was very sweet and touching; and when at length the clock struck one sharp reproachful stroke, reminding us that the small hours had begun, we all started in amazement, Banks rose hastily to wish us good-night. He took Addy's offered hand and held it a moment, gazing into her pathetic face. There were tears in her eyes, and, I believe, moisture in his.

"Thank you. Music was invented to unman us," he said, and was gone.

To our surprise and annoyance Addy kept to her resolution, and we accompanied her to the station the next morning. She was profuse in her gratitude to us, but she persisted in repeating, "It is best, it is best." We put her into a first-class carriage, in which was no other passenger, at her particular request, for she said she wished to be alone. We were making our last adieus through the window, and my wife was extracting a promise of return, when I saw Banks fuming up the platform. I nudged my wife, who mastered the occasion intuitively. I went to meet him, saying, in the elegant language of the period, "Where are you off to?"

"I am going abroad—I will write," he said.

"Just in time; jump in here!" I exclaimed, pushing my wife aside, and opening the door.

Addy's compartment.

He obeyed, not perceiving the lady.

"Take care of her, Mr. Banks. So glad to have an escort, Addy!" cried my wife, train steamed off instantly.

Addy looked after us with a pale, reproachful face; but there was no room for her or Banks.

"Suppose they leap out of the train and get my wife. A sentiment!"

"The railway will be the best."

said I.

And so it proved. A letter came the next post from Addy, enclosing a note from Banks.

"For—for—she was engaged to me, and was so happy and it was the following day Banks called my wife 'My'."

The fact that he was but—but—was gone.

"Then we shall see," said Mrs. Banks.

And so "the

DESMORO;

OR,

THE RED HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY STRAWS," "VOICES FROM THE LUMBER-ROOM," "THE HUMMING-BIRD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

Braymount was full of consternation and horror; the sad and terrible tale had travelled from door to door; and groups of gossips were talking it over at the corners of almost every street, lane, and alley in the town.

The Braymount evening *Advertiser* contained a long account of the robbery and dreadful murder of Mrs. Polderbrant, late an actress at the Theatre Royal belonging to the aforesaid town, and stated that the man charged with having perpetrated the revolting deed was one Desmoro Desmoro, a young actor attached to Mr. Jellico's company.

On the night following Mrs. Polderbrant's death, although Mr. Mackmillerman was announced to appear in one of his favorite characters, not a creature came near the theatre, the doors of which had to be reclosed and the lights extinguished.

Comfort Shavins was seated by her sick father's bedside, her eyelids swollen with weeping, and her bosom sore with heavy grief. At first she would not credit the frightful story of Desmoro's guilt; but when she recalled a certain conversation she had once held with him concerning Mrs. Polderbrant's probable worldly possessions, her belief in his integrity became somewhat shaken.

"Oh dear, oh dear! she sobbed aloud. "And it was that he might be enabled to purchase books to read to me that he robbed poor Mrs. Polderbrant."

But the young girl did not understand that Desmoro's life was in actual danger, that he might be doomed to suffer the extreme penalty of the law for the fearful crime of which he stood accused. Comfort was in ignorance of this, else her anxiety and grief on his account would have known no bounds.

She had no one near her to whom she could talk of Desmoro, no one to sympathize with her feelings in this matter. Her father was lying in an almost emebic state, scarcely comprehending what was passing around him, and it would be quite useless to trouble him with this terrible tale.

By-and-by Comfort repaired to the theatre, in order, if possible, to hear further particulars relative to Desmoro's position, but she found that there was no rehearsal in progress, and that all theatrical business affairs were at a standstill for the present.

First she questioned one member of the company, then another, respecting her young friend; but those she questioned only shook their heads and remained silent.

Jellico could see nothing but ruin staring him in the face did he remain at Braymount. Mr. Mackmillerman was again announced to appear in one of his favorite characters, yet not a soul troubled the box-office for places or tickets for the approaching night of performance.

There was nothing left but flight for the whole troupe, as the late tragical affair had cast a terrible stigma upon each and every one of the members of that troupe. Generally speaking, country people have mighty strong prejudices of their own, and in that respect the inhabitants of Braymount were not different from their neighbours. And the theatre had suddenly become a sort of plague-spot; a place of loathsome horror to those worthy but weak-minded townfolk, who, one and all, shunned it, vowing never to yield to its attractions more.

"There's nothing for me to do but to break up the whole concern," said the manager, addressing the members of his company, now assembled in the green-room of the theatre. "I am not a man of means, and cannot pretend to stand up and struggle against this unexpected and terrible circumstance. Jellico's name is disgraced everlastingly; not of his own wrongdoing, but through this most unhappy and terrible tragedy, regarding which I believe Desmoro Desmoro to possess no more knowledge than my own innocent self. There is a mystery in the affair altogether, a mystery I cannot attempt to fathom. Poor Mrs. Polderbrant, I feel convinced, was the victim of a delusion; but she is gone, and heaven can only say how this case will end, how far this most unfortunate young man will be made to suffer for the crime laid to his charge?"

Comfort listened to the manager in breathless agitation and alarm.

What would they do to Desmoro, supposing he were really to be proved guilty?"

Oh! she dreaded to ask that question, dreaded even to put it to herself.

She sat silent, a dizzy sensation in her brain, a deathly sickness gathering round her heart. None present surmised the state of her feelings at this aching moment; indeed, none had time to do so, for each and all had enough to do to think of themselves.

She understood that Jellico's company was disbanded; that she and her sick father were now without an engagement—without either money or friends, and that understanding had fairly stunned her.

Comfort had known nothing but pinching throughout all her young lifetime, and for her afflicted father's sake, more than for her own, she was lamenting this change in their worldly condition, and the poverty and misery which now threatened them. From her earliest youth the clown's daughter had been accustomed to reflect on many matters—on matters which were far, far beyond her experience and her years—and to contend with a host of little trials (great ones to her) with scant, and not unfrequently with positive want itself. She was quite sensible then of what was in store for them; of the troubles which were staring them in the face; and it was no wonder that her young spirit quailed within her as she contemplated the dark present, and the still darker future.

There was a doctor's bill to be paid she remembered, and likewise many other debts; her father's illness had run her into several pecuniary straits, out of which she could not possibly see her way.

She was almost penniless—her parent still ill—what, what was she to do—what could she do?

She quitted the green-room with heavy, lagging steps, thinking of Desmoro—of the dead Mrs. Polderbrant, and of all the distress and disgrace that had been brought upon Manager Jellico and his company.

When she reached the stage entrance Pidgers accosted her.

His manner was cringing in the extreme. He marked her swollen eyelids, and he drew his own wise conclusions as to wherefore they were swollen.

"How's Maister Shavins, Miss Comfort?" he asked, in a whining tone.

"Not much better, I thank you," was the low-voiced reply.

"An' he'd be wuss if he on'y knowed about all this sight of moltheration, wouldn't he, miss?"

"Yes," was the vacant answer.

"Of course Maister Desmoro'll be hanged!" said the wretch.

"Hanged!" shuddered the girl, leaning against the wall for support; "who will be hanged?"

"Why, him the prisoner, miss; Maister Desmoro Desmoro, to be sure!"

"No, no!" she half shrieked, "no, no! He is not guilty!"

"It would be a precious good job for him if ye could prove that he aren't," returned the man coarsely. "Who do you think killed Mrs. Polderbrant, if he didn't?"

"I—I don't know," she stammered in terror, her whole face ghastly to behold. "It is all too terrible to contemplate," she added, making her way to the outer door, her knees smiting each other as she walked, death-like faintness creeping over her.

Suddenly she clutched at the wall, seeking its support; then her fragile limbs gave way, she tottered forward and sank into a chair.

At this instant a carriage rolled up to the stage entrance, and after a pause, Mr. Mackmillerman was at Comfort's side.

Poor girl! She was too much prostrated by her sorrows and her terrors to refuse the sympathy of any one. No marvel, then, that she listened to his soothing words, now poured into her ears, and, listening to them, that they afforded her some consolation.

Mr. Mackmillerman was old enough to be her father, and, taking that fact into consideration, she, to a certain extent, suffered him to gain her confidence.

The gentleman who had driven the Cerberus into his chimney corner, talked to Comfort in subdued tones, none of which reached Pidgers' ears, although these ears were strained to their very utmost in vain endeavors to catch a stray word here and there.

"You are far too unwell to proceed hence alone," observed the actor, addressing his companion. "Here is my carriage at the door, and I beg that you will allow me to see you safely home."

"No, no, thank you," she returned. "I shall be better in a few moments. I must not trouble you."

"Nay, it would be a pleasure to do anything for you!" he rejoined in a gallant manner, yet with the utmost respect in all his tones.

"I think I'd better speak to Mr. Jellico first—he might be able to advise me what to do," faltered poor Comfort, at a loss how to act or what to say at the time.

"I will not only advise, but assist you," he answered quickly. "I have both the will and the means to do so, if you will not thrust aside the hand of friendship now extended towards you."

"I do not know how to act," was her bewildered reply.

"I will go home with you, see your father, and instruct you what will be the best for you to do," he responded persuasively. "Come! Why should you not trust me as you would Mr. Jellico? Am I a bear, that you are thus afraid of me?"

"I am not afraid of you."

"Then wherefore thus reject my courtesies?"

She did not answer him. Her bosom was overflowing with an accumulation of sorrow, and her tears were ready to break forth afresh.

At length she let him lead her to and place her by his side within the equipage, which was driven away at once in the direction of Comfort's lodgings.

CHAPTER XV.

Col. Symure had well-nigh fretted himself to

death on his son's account; but it was not until the second morning after the occurrence of the robbery and the death of Mrs. Polderbrant, that a paper, containing a full and particular account of the case, fell into his hands.

The name of Desmoro first attracted his notice, then he read on and on, until he had become master of the whole matter.

He uttered no sound; but the paper was clutched fast in his hands, and his teeth penetrated his lip, and brought forth a gush of crimson fluid.

At this time Caroline was pouring out his cup of chocolate; and Percy, who was suffering from a slight attack of the gout, which had confined him to the house for the last few days, was eating his breakfast, paying particular attention to a certain dainty French dish, and too much engaged to notice his brother's excited ways.

Colonel Symure turned the sheet of intelligence round and round, and always returned to the same terror-fraught article, which he read over and over again, until the printed letters seemed to scorch his eyes and brain, and nearly drove him mad.

"You do not eat your breakfast," remarked Mrs. Symure, fixing her suspicious eyes on her husband's face.

He started, dropped the paper, and looked at her for a few seconds, before he could find voice to make her any reply.

"My breakfast? Ah, true!" he said hollowly, regaining possession of the newspaper and staring at his plate like one whose wits were far astray.

"What ails you?" she asked, with some asperity in her accents.

"Eh?" ejaculated Percy, for an instant looking up from his plate. "Take one of those *côtelettes de mouton*, they are cooked to perfection; I can recommend them."

"Thanks; I have finished breakfast," the Colonel answered, scarcely conscious of what he was saying.

"What! finished breakfast before you have even touched it?" cried Caroline. "More mystery, Colonel Symure!" she continued, in taunting syllables.

"Mystery!" repeated Percy, again glancing up from his plate, the contents of which had been rapidly disappearing piece after piece. "What's it all about, Des, eh?"

Colonel Symure's face was first white then red, and his heart was beating fast and painfully.

Oh, the torture of this hour, and the torture he was yet anticipating!

Once, twice, and thrice his secret was on his very lips, on the point of being revealed to his wife; but the fear he had of her thrust it back again into his breast, and kept it there.

After the meal was over, Caroline, who had subsided into a fit of the sullen, left the room, and the two brothers were alone together.

Scarcely had the door closed upon his wife, when the Colonel sprang up and began to pace the floor backwards and forwards in the utmost perturbation.

Percy had taken up a sporting chronicle, and was lazily inspecting its columns, carelessly humming to himself all the while.

Presently he looked at his brother, put down the sheet, and moved uneasily in his chair.

"What the deuce ails you, Des?" he inquired, somewhat impatiently, his visage assuming a still redder hue. "Can't you sit down and let your breakfast digest itself in peace; but I forgot, you eat none; while, on the contrary, I enjoyed mine amazingly. Do sit down, Des, you give me the fidgets to see you marching to and fro in that stupid fashion. Ah, you never felt a tinge of the gout or you would understand what I suffer with that villainous complaint, and would avoid worrying me as you are doing now."

"Great heaven!" exclaimed the Colonel, suddenly stopping in front of his brother's chair. "Don't be so utterly selfish, Percy, don't imagine that this world was made expressly for you!"

"Selfish! I declare, Des—"

"Remember that others suffer as well as yourself; and learn that at this moment I am enduring an anguish most intolerable, an anguish such as you dream not of."

"Bless me, Des! Where do you feel ill?"

"Here, and here!" the Colonel answered, touching first his breast and then his brow.

"Heart and brain together!" cried Percy. "A bad case, I should say. It is strange that I never heard you complain until now. You'd better consult your medical man at once; I should do so."

"Percy," said the Colonel, taking a chair opposite to his brother, and speaking severely, "Percy, do you think that you entertain a single atom of feeling for me?"

"Jove, what an odd question, to be sure!" returned the other. "Pon honor, I shall begin to doubt your sanity if you go on at this rate. I recollect once being told that our father's great grandsire was a most eccentric person, who did all sorts of queer things; I hope that you have not inherited this malady, that—"

"Pshaw! Percy, Percy, if I go mad it will be with sorrow for what I have done—for the great wrong I once committed."

"Oh, dear, dear! Is it the old subject brought up again? Why not let it rest—I should?"

"I know you would," said the Colonel, in a marked tone. "Read that," he added, giving him the paper containing the account of Desmoro's apprehension and the fearful charge preferred against him, and placing his finger on a particular paragraph, "Read that, and then wonder that you see me in as calm a state as I am."

"As sure as I live, there's a fit of gout in store

for me," sighed Percy Symure as he reluctantly prepared himself to obey his brother's wishes.

Then there ensued a pause. Presently Percy gave utterance to a prolonged whistle, and laid down the sheet, his countenance absolutely purple with amazement and horror at what he had just perused.

The Colonel now started up and renewed his marching to and fro—he could not sit still; the tempest in his brain and heart would not let him have any rest.

"The young ruffian!" exclaimed Percy, in great disgust. "Here again have I preserved you from acting foolishly; here again have you cause to bless your stars that you have had such a cool-headed adviser as myself. But for me you would have had this villainous, sanguinary miscreant on your hands; you would have owned him before all the world as your son—as a legitimate Symure. But I felt that he was a scoundrel from the very beginning; and I believe I told you as much—didn't I? At all events, if I didn't express my opinion of him in words, I—"

"Cease, Percy, to congratulate yourself on your boasted foresight!" broke forth the Colonel, abruptly stopping in his walk. "Cease; for I frankly tell you that I blame you, and you alone for all my suffering—for all I shall yet have to suffer. You were my elder brother, my monitor and guardian, and you should have counselled me to act justly and mercifully; you should have led my wayward steps out of the crooked path into the straight one, you should—"

"Zounds!" interrupted the listener; but the Colonel heeded him not, and still continued in the same excited strain as before.

"The lad is falsely accused. I could stake my life upon his honesty in word and deed; and I will move both heaven and earth in order to prove his innocence."

Here Percy Symure groaned audibly.

"Say, will you give me your assistance in this painful affair? Will you undertake the breaking of this matter to Caroline, so that I may be enabled to stir freely in the service of my son—will you?"

"Will I lay myself up with a confounded fit of the gout—will I bring upon myself the rage of two vixenish women? Not I, faith! Though my locks be grey, I value their possession too well to suffer them to be combed by Caroline's fingers. Ye powers! What a mistake I committed in coming down here for peace! Why, there have been nothing but wars ever since my arrival; I shall run away instantly; I shall indeed, since I have discovered that I have a madman for a brother."

"Oh, Percy, Percy!"

"Better to be in hot water with Lucy, than to be scalded by the whole family. In other words, Des, if you have resolved upon rushing headlong into disgrace and ruin—of claiming a thief and murderer for your truly begotten son,—I'll tell my man to pack up directly, and I'll be off. I couldn't remain here to go through such scenes as Caroline will create when she hears of the existence of—I shudder to name the wicked monster—but you understand."

"I know well what I shall receive at the hands of my wife, should I ever feel myself compelled to avow to her my secret," said the Colonel. "But did I apprehend from her twice as much, I must do my duty in this unhappy business. But be assured on this point, I will not do anything rashly: I will endeavor to spare the members of my family all useless trouble, disgrace and pain. Will that assurance content you, Percy?"

"I do not quite comprehend the meaning of your words," returned the brother fretfully.

"Unless I am absolutely necessitated to reveal to my wife and others the secret of my first marriage, and the birth of my son, I promise, most solemnly, not to do so."

"Yes, I comprehend," said Percy, shaking his head, doubtfully. "But that won't do; no, my advice is, that you apply for leave of absence from your regiment, and leave Braymount for Paris—dear, delightful Paris!—whither I will most joyfully accompany you. Depend upon it, Des, I am counselling you for your good, both now and to come. Leave this young vagrant of a stroller to fight through his own dark doings, and cease to concern yourself at all about him."

Colonel Symure was silent. His brother's specious tongue had but little influence over him now. His better feelings had been aroused within his breast—feelings which could not be overcome by the sophistry of mere words.

Just at this moment there came a sturdy ringing at the house-door, and presently a servant appeared with an official despatch in his hands, and a sergeant of the Colonel's regiment at his heels.

"Eh! what news is afloat, sergeant?" asked Colonel Symure, in surprise, breaking open the sealed massive as he spoke.

"There's a riot at Cleghorn, I believe, Colonel," replied the soldier.

The officer changed color, as he perused the despatch, while his brother blandly smiled, and played with his whiskers.

Not an instant was to be lost. Colonel Symure had to don his regimentals at once, and march forth to check the riotous affairs at Cleghorn.

"By Jove! a most fortunate event!" cried Percy within himself. "There is surely some watchful spirit over Des, that has called him away at this critical time, just as he was about to play the fool, and bring destruction on us all!"

Colonel Symure left Braymount with an

aching heart. But he was a soldier, and the stern call of duty he was bound to obey.

Percy now wholly recovered himself. His brother was removed far from Braymount to a place where he might probably be detained some weeks, during which time this Desmoro Desmoro's fate would be irrevocably sealed.

Percy rubbed his hands, and inwardly blessed all malecontents. Nothing more fortunate than this sudden outbreak at Cleghorn could possibly have happened to Des, he thought.

Mrs. Symure became even moresullen than before. Her husband was removed out of her sight now, and her suspicious temper worked itself up into a state of perfect ferment. She felt that the Colonel was keeping some secret from her; and having that feeling, her ungenerous mind imagined all sorts of evil things about him; and she was mentally accusing him of committing almost every wicked deed, in creation; and had she not had a guest in the person of her brother-in-law, she would have followed the Colonel into the thickest of the fray, regardless of every danger, so long as she but succeeded in tormenting him, and could make him as miserable as herself.

CHAPTER XVI.

From a post-mortem examination of Mrs. Polderbrant's body, it had been satisfactorily proved that she had not died from the effect of the robber's blow. The immediate cause of her decease had been fright—the shock her nervous system had received on that fatal night.

Jellico felt some relief on hearing the above intelligence. Desmoro's life was not in jeopardy, and his conscience was not stained with a fellow-creature's blood.

Desmoro, the supposed criminal, was brought up before the county magistrate, and formally examined by him.

Unfortunate Desmoro! his cup of misery was now brimming over. All the previous night the poor prisoner was picturing to himself the scene of trial he was now an actor in.

Jellico was present at this time; so, likewise was Pidgers.

The confused evidence of the latter in nowise assisted our hero; but, on the contrary, flung a doubt and mystery around all his late doings.

The magistrate, who was not a man of even mediocre intelligence, did not trouble himself much to investigate the affair. He soon arrived at a conclusion; and that, too, without any particular consideration on his part.

"Young man," he said, in a hard voice, "the evidence is against you!"

Desmoro started, and gazed around him with dazed difficulties.

"What have you to say for yourself?" added the justice, in accents the same as before.

"I am innocent, sir—I am innocent of all knowledge of the deed of which I stand accused!" Desmoro answered, his head erect—tones full of honesty and pride.

The magistrate looked full of doubt, and shook his head; and the prisoner went on endeavoring to defend himself, but all without the slightest avail.

"I am very sorry, young man," said the justice; "but your assertions—earnest as they are—will not overbalance plain facts. The testimony implicates you so directly, that I must order you back to prison, to answer to a charge of house-breaking and robbery, with serious violence as well."

Desmoro bowed his head submissively. He felt that his voice would be unavailing; that nothing he could say would alter the doom of his destiny.

He cast an appealing look at Jellico, (whose eyes were filled with sympathy) and another at the villain Pidgers, but disdained to utter a word further.

To say that Desmoro was agonized, wretched, were to poorly express the dismay which had seized upon his soul. Heavily ironed, he was conveyed back to prison there to await his coming trial.

His heart sank within his breast as he was conducted along the dark, echoing, stone corridor, and the iron door of his cell swung back to receive him. But he uttered no sound, and walked steadily onward into the grim place assigned him.

Desmoro had no stars of hope to his firmament; clouds of despair—black, lowering clouds only hung over him.

The door of his cell was closed upon him, and the gaoler's steps fading on his ear. A faint light penetrated through the thickly-barred window (which was far above his reach); and now a solemn stillness pervaded the place—a stillness that was only disturbed at intervals, when the neighboring church bells tolled forth the successive hours.

He stretched himself on his hard, narrow couch, and reviewed his unhappy position—reviewed it thoroughly.

All before and around him was utter darkness. The person whose word, had such been honestly spoken, might have established his entire innocence, had refused to speak the truth, and had given a confused and contradictory evidence; which, being managed cleverly, had had the effect of convincing the magistrate that Desmoro was guilty of the crime imputed to him.

Pidgers was supremely ignorant, 'tis true; and he was most subtle and plausible, as well. He had pretended to scruple at swearing to this circumstance, or to that; and he had done so with such apparent good faith, that all present were impressed with an idea that he was aware of the prisoner's criminality, and was doing his utmost to conceal it. Not a single person saw

through the man's wickedness—none even suspected him of evil.

Desmoro had forgotten the late scene of altercation which had taken place between Pidgers and himself, and that it was likely the man might owe him a grudge for the unmannerly shaking he had received at his hands. Desmoro's nature was far too generous to harbor vengeful feelings against any one; and he ever charitably judged the dispositions of others by his own.

Poor, parentless fellow! Lying there in his dreary cell, can you wonder if he began to murmur over his lamentable fate, and wish that he had never been born!

Mrs. Polderbrant was in her grave: she whom he had deemed his staunch friend was no more. She had died, leaving behind her a fearful accusation against him; an accusation through which the liberty of all his future life stood imperilled.

Yet he did not reproach her memory; he thought gently of the dead—gently of every one.

While he was thus lying, the gaoler unlocked his cell-door, and Samuel Jellico stood before the young prisoner, who started up on the instant.

The worthy manager looked much disturbed, and deadly pale.

The gaoler now withdrew to the door, and Desmoro and Jellico were alone together.

"You are surprised at my visit?" said the latter, in a tone of interrogation.

"Not very much, sir. You are so good, that no kindly act of yours could surprise me."

"I am come to ask you to make a clean breast to me, Desmoro; in other words, to beg you to confess to me the whole truth of this dreadful business."

"I have nothing to confess to you or any one, sir. I can only repeat my former protestations, only declare that I am wholly innocent of the charge made against me."

"Are you aware that this terrible affair has completely ruined me? The theatre is closed, the company broken up, and its members suddenly sent adrift, to find engagements wheresoever they can."

"Is it so, indeed, sir?" stammered Desmoro, with white, quivering lips, his thoughts at once reverting to Comfort and her sick father. "Heaven help me! Misfortune and I are twain! How I grieve at being the cause of such trouble to you and others! But of how innocent I am of all wrong, He above can judge! I can say no more, sir; I am fairly weary of making protestations, which gain credence from no one!"

"Shall I write to Mr. Thetford?" pursued the kind-hearted manager. "He has means, and may possibly assist you in some way or other. You cannot, at the present moment, rally around you too many friends; you will require all that you can muster."

Desmoro shuddered as he listened. "No," said he, proudly; "I am innocent; and being so, my own simple tongue alone shall defend me. Do not write to Mr. Thetford, I beg, sir."

"Desmoro, reflect; you are standing in a terrible position."

"I am fully aware of that fact, sir; but I am trusting in the One on high. He will not forsake me."

Jellico turned aside his head; the young man's accents touched him deeply; and he felt ready to weep over him as he would have wept over his own son.

"Would you like to communicate with your grandfather?" he inquired, eager to befriend him in some way.

"No, sir; the old man has learned to forget me by this time, and I should not like to disturb his feelings."

"I can do nothing for you then?"

"Nothing, thank you, sir, except—"

And Desmoro here halted in his speech, and looked confusedly on the floor.

"Except what, my lad? Speak out?"

"I should like Comfort Shavings and her father to know that I am guiltless of the crime laid to my charge," he replied. "It is agony to be confined within these four walls, with these galling fetters on my limbs; and feel that those who once loved me are now despising and hating my very name. Mr. Jellico, will you tell them that I am the same in word and deed as when they first knew me; that I am still worthy of their kind remembrance and affection? Will you—will you tell them this?"

"I will, Desmoro—I will!"

"I may never see them again, for I may be condemned!" he added, his voice husky and tremulous.

Jellico did not answer, but stretched out his hand to the poor prisoner, who caught at, and held it, clasped between his palms. "Heaven bless you, sir!" he said, chokingly.

"And heaven bless you, Desmoro!" returned the good man. "I will call upon the Shavings to-day. I am very anxious about them, for—"

But, there, I will not further distress you, as you have already full plenty, and too much, to occupy your mind. I will see you again to-morrow. Good-bye, Desmoro!"

"Good-bye, sir!"

And the manager left the cell, and soon made his way out of the dreary prison walls.

He went along with a saddened heart. He was thinking of the trouble that had so recently befallen him; of his disbanding troupe, and of Desmoro's painful and terror-fraught position.

There was such strong testimony against the prisoner. There was the condemnatory evidence of the dead Mrs. Polderbrant, which evidence would appear upon his trial to condemn and crush him.

"Lost! lost!" exclaimed Jellico, as he reflect-

ed on all this, and hastened his onward footsteps.

After proceeding along for some considerable length of time, he turned into an obscure locality, and sought the entrance of the Shavings' abode.

An old woman answered Jellico's appeal at the door.

"Eh, they are both gone, sir!" she replied as soon as she saw his face.

"Both gone! What on earth do you mean?" he asked, in great surprise.

"That Mr. Shavings and Miss Comfort be both on 'em gone away, sir; and I don't know where."

"He did go away, that's certain, sir," answered the woman.

"Explain—explain!" cried Jellico, impatiently.

"Well, sir, they went off in a private carriage—Miss Comfort crying all the while."

"A private carriage!" exclaimed Jellico; "you must be romancing, I think, my good woman."

"What is that, sir?"

"Well, you have made some mistake."

"Not a bit of it, sir; I've made no mistake at all."

The manager stared at the speaker in utter bewilderment.

"When did they go?" he demanded.

"A couple of hours ago, no more, sir."

"In a private carriage?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whose?"

"Mr. Mackmillerman's, sir."

"What!" returned Jellico, in increased perplexity. "Will you permit me to walk indoors, if you please? You will be able to explain matters better there," he added, feeling all at once full of vague alarm.

"Now let me hear everything," said he, on reaching one of the rooms which had once belonged to the Shavings. "Miss Comfort's father was better, I suppose?"

"Better, sir, but far from being himself. It cost Miss Comfort many bitter tears to depart, but her father would have it so, and she deed not oppose his will."

"Still, I cannot comprehend matters."

"Nor can I, sir. All I can say is, that my lodgers have left me—left me quite grandly, and in the company of Mr. Macmillerman."

"They have quitted you for good?"

"For good, sir."

"Without stating whither they were going?"

"Exactly so, sir."

"This is all very strange."

"I am thinking as much within myself, sir."

"You say that Miss Comfort went hence reluctantly?"

"She did, sir," rejoined the woman. "But I must say that they treated me in a most honorable and handsome manner. They amply repaid me for every thing I had done."

"I am glad to hear as much," returned Jellico, now fuller and fuller of wonderment. "Mr. Macmillerman has been their friend, it seems?"

"That's precisely my idea, sir."

"Who paid you?"

"Miss Comfort, herself, sir, looking white as a ghost all the while, and with such a pair of red rims round her eyes, caused by crying, I suppose."

The manager meditated for some few seconds, his brain in a perfect maze.

"You have nothing to tell me?"

"Not a single word, sir."

Still Jellico paused, as if he fain would question the woman further.

"They took their luggage with them?"

"They did, sir."

"Thank you! I am much obliged."

And so saying, the manager departed.

He felt quite stupefied. Whither were the Shavings gone, and wherefore was it that Mr. Macmillerman was their companion? There was a mystery in this sudden disappearance of the sick man and his young daughter—a mystery that Jellico could not solve. The clown, he reflected, was not in a fit state to travel far—then whither, whither had they gone?

Never in all his life had the manager felt so completely lost in hopeless conjecture. Turn his thoughts this way or that, they helped him nothing—he was just as much informed now as before.

On and on he went, buried in thought, when, suddenly lifting his eyes he found that he was at the door of the hotel where Mr. Mackmillerman was or had been staying.

In another instant Jellico had entered the house, and was questioning one of its waiters.

"Mr. Mackmillerman has left town, sir."

"He does not intend to return?"

"No, sir."

"Thanks," said the disappointed manager, turning on his heel, and regaining the street once more.

Towards the theatre, hoping that he should there find letters from Mr. Mackmillerman and Comfort, he next bent his steps.

No; there was no letters for him there. To-morrow, probably, there would be some, he thought, as he left the stage door.

But the morrow brought no intelligence whatever to Jellico; and, mystified entirely, he proceeded towards the prison, to seek an interview with Desmoro, whom he found in a most dejected state, with pallid cheeks and swollen eyelids, as if he had passed a night of sleepless anguish.

The manager felt that he was the bearer of painful tidings, and that it would be a blow to Desmoro to hear that the Shavings had quitted Braymount without sending him a single token

of their sympathy or remembrance. Recollecting how many hours Desmoro had bestowed in instructing Comfort's mind, Jellico considered that she had acted most ungratefully towards him, and he condemned her accordingly.

The young prisoner looked up inquiringly as he greeted his welcome visitor, who had silently seated himself on a wooden stool.

"I think people are not what they used to be, Desmoro," he remarked after a pause; "the world is being turned upside-down." And Jellico leaned his head on his hand, and looked abstractedly on the floor.

Desmoro saw that something had occurred to distress his friend, but he refrained from making any inquiries. He waited until Jellico himself chose to explain matters.

Presently the manager spoke.

"I couldn't deliver your message to your friends, the Shavings, Desmoro," he said awkwardly.

"I am sorry for that, sir."

"She has quitted Braymount."

"Comfort?"

"And her father likewise."

"Mr. Jellico," quaked Desmoro, "I—I do not comprehend."

"Neither do I; the thing is beyond my comprehension altogether. But they are gone—gone without leaving me a word, good or bad!"

"Gone whither?"

"No one can tell me that," returned the manager, "They're gone off with Mr. Mackmillerman, strange to say."

"With Mr. Mackmillerman?" gasped Desmoro, his face suddenly flushing scarlet, and then as suddenly becoming pale again.

"Yes; to me it's all a mystery."

Desmoro did not reply; he felt stunned and worldless.

While he was in this condition Jellico narrated to him the few scanty and unsatisfactory particulars he had gleaned from the woman relative to the departure of the Shavings.

Desmoro listened like one only half awake; he heard all the words, but did not fully understand their meaning.

Comfort gone! Then farewell hope, farewell everything! Desmoro was reckless now, and cared not what became of him. For she had fallen from him—she who had been his solace, his guiding star, his only joy on earth! He had no heart to cling unto now; he stood alone in the world—alone in that world which appeared to him an empty place, a huge desolation.

"It's downright ingratitude on her part to run away thus," said Jellico, remembering his condition. "I don't blame poor Shavings a jot, but she might have recollected her old friends, especially yourself, Desmoro—"

"No, no," he burst forth; "she believes me to be a guilty wretch, a midnight robber, and, in that case, it is only natural that she should disdain all knowledge of me now. Don't think unkindly of her, sir; I shall not do so, I am sure."

The young prisoner's eyes were blinded with tears, and his eyes were quivering with emotion.

When the manager quitted the cell its occupant threw himself upon his couch and sobbed loudly, bitterly, and long.

The last blow was struck, all was over now, he thought.

Oh heavens! could he but have read the book of fate, how he would have shuddered over its fearful revelations.

At length his tears dried themselves up, and he became more calm. But his calmness was that of settled despair. The blessed sunlight of his existence had vanished, and he was standing in pitchy, stumbling darkness. How changed he felt, how cold and sore his bosom seemed to be! He fancied that he could never weep again, that the wild tempest of his soul had passed, to return no more. Henceforth there would be iron in his breast—hard, inflexible iron, upon which neither man nor woman should ever be allowed to make any impression. And, since his truth could find no hearing, he would be false in all his words and deeds, and set society at defiance.

Was it not true that he had been robbed of his only treasure, his honest name?

Well, wherefore should he repine about the matter? Could he not live to avenge the cruel wrongs which had been heaped upon his young and unoffending head?

And as he thus reflected, Desmoro's eyes gleamed savagely upon his prison walls; and he breathed a solemn oath—at which the registering angel dropped a silent tear—an oath of undying vengeance against all mankind.

(To be continued.)

Apropos of the American story we recently gave of a book agent whom the Omaha people tried to kill, but who returned with Cassell's Illustrated Bible, trying to get a subscription from the head of the attacking party, an equally good story is told of the canvasser of a London publisher. He found his way into the parlour of a branch bank, and saw the manager, who, as soon as he learned his business, ordered him out. Very quietly he said, "I meet with so many gentlemen in the course of the week that I can afford to meet a snob occasionally," and walked off. Next day he called at the bank again, and wished to open an account. He was again shown in to the manager, and gave very satisfactory reasons for opening the account, and deposited £270. The manager could not do less than apologise for his rudeness on the day preceding, and ordered a copy of the work—an expensive Bible—and allowed access to the clerks, several of whom did the same. Two days afterwards every farthing was drawn out.

FLORENCE CARR.

A STORY OF FACTORY LIFE.

CHAPTER XXXI.—(continued.)

Bitterly Mrs. Bolton remembered her son's agony only the night before his arrest, when smarting under this woman's indifference, and though she hated her the more, she feared her as well, for the blight which, without cause, circumstance, or reason, she attributed to her.

"What dost a mean, mother?" asked Moll, in surprise and perplexity. "Florence had not to do wi' Willie being taken fra' us; instead o' that, she gave me brass—five pounds, to pay the lawyer, to try to get us off."

Florence kept her eye fixed with the same threatening expression upon the old woman, who certainly had much more to lose than the girl herself by any unwise revelations that it was in her power to make.

Swallowing her pride and bad temper as well as she could, Mrs. Bolton remarked, in a more conciliatory tone—

"Did she? Well, mayhap I misjudge her, but I canna abide a woman as ha' got no heart, and vallys a man only for the brass he's got."

"I think you're very cross this morning, mother," said Moll, with a slight dash of vexation. "Florence ha' done nort and said nort, as I see, to mak' yo' so. I've very glad she's got such good luck, and if she's satisfied to tak' the master wi'out much love on her part, she's sure there's some on his, else what should he marry her for? And it's best for the love to be on his side, arter all; p'raps it'll mak' a better man on him."

"Well, I wish 'em both luck on each other," said the elder woman, ambiguously, as she put the last of the breakfast things away, and then went to get on her bonnet and shawl.

"Eligh, art thee going out, mother? I'll go wi' yo', if you'll ha' me," said Moll, fearing she had vexed Willie's mother.

"Aye, I'll be glad o' the company," was the reply, and very soon after Florence was left alone.

Alone with the letter which had been so welcome to her, and with her own thoughts.

To be alone, to indulge in one's own thoughts, with a letter containing an offer of marriage, which the recipient intended to accept, in one's hand, would by most people be considered a great luxury, and it was with the view of affording it that Moll had gone out.

We are often told, that what is food to one person, is poison to another. Perhaps it was so in the present case, for scarcely had the door closed upon her companions, than all the excitement of defiance and anticipated triumph faded from the girl's face, just as one has seen the sun at the last gasp of day sink below the horizon, and the dark shades of night overcast the earth.

"Dare I do it?" she muttered, with darkening brow. "Is the gain worth the risk? Am I not safer, even happier, in obscurity, than I shall be when I have snatched the glittering bauble? I shall be hated and envied, and if one breath of suspicion is ever breathed, I shall be hurled down to destruction."

Thus thinking, she hid her face in her hands, not to weep, but to try to shut out from her sight the pictures which haunted her.

In vain—they grew darker and more vivid, as she tried to banish them.

"If we were as we used to be, I think I would refuse," she muttered, clinging as it were to a straw, by which to justify herself; "but that old woman that I hate, coming here, has spoilt all the comfort of home, or of life. I wish that she could have been transported with her son, that's what I do."

And she clenched her small right hand, while her eyes flashed vindictively.

"Thanks to her," she went on, "I can't live here much longer, and I can't make enough to live alone. Besides, I am tired of this grubbing state of existence; it isn't life, and be the consequences what they will, I'll end it."

There was a light in her eyes now which she had seen but once, and that was on her arrival that dark November night in Oldham.

A wild, desperate light, such as one might notice in the expression of a hunted animal, yet with its teeth firmly clenched, as though in

desperation it would fly at the throat of the first person that approached it.

The struggle, if indeed there had been any doubt on the subject, was over, and as soon as she could sufficiently calm herself, she found the penny bottle of ink, an old pen, and a sheet of note paper.

Upon this, in a fine ladylike hand, such as Lady Helen Beltram herself could not have surpassed in beauty of calligraphy, she wrote the following—

"MY DEAR MR. GRESHAM.—I accept the offer of your hand, and will to the utmost of my ability make you a good wife. I shall be home at six this evening, and happy to see you then, if not otherwise engaged.

"Yours sincerely,

"FLORENCE CARR."

Not a very gushing epistle, you may think, but then Florence was anything but a gusher.

She had never professed to be in love with the rich mill owner—why, therefore, imply what she did not feel?

That she liked, or rather, that she did not dislike him was true, but beyond this, it was

as she rose from her seat to greet the man who had been her employer, in his new character of accepted suitor.

She was dressed in a plain lustrous black silk dress, with a flowing skirt and train, the body closely fitting her splendidly well-developed, yet not too exuberant figure.

This, with many other small articles of elegance, even luxury, had been purchased with part of the fifteen pounds which she had left after giving Moll five, from the contents of one of her valentines.

A frill of narrow lace, and bows of crimson ribbon at her throat and in her hair, were all the ornament or relief afforded to her dark dress, except the lovely face and coils of black hair which gave her head such a purely classical contour.

No tawdry finery, nothing to shock his taste, but looking every inch a lady, she advanced calmly, and the most self-possessed of the quartette to meet him.

Lady Helen Beltram might have envied the ease, grace, and tact, with which this despised mill hand received her guest and suitor. With a few light, pleasant words, she set him and her companions at ease, and then, at his request,

Lethe, she might have made a far better wife than he could ever have deserved.

The past, however, is real as the present, and sure as the future to rebound upon every human being; hence it would be wise in all of us to remember that no foolish or wicked act of ours but will bring forth fruit, perchance a hundred-fold, to our bitter cost and peril.

"She be a clever un," said Mrs. Bolton, as the door closed upon the lovers; "who be she, Moll, and where didst thee find her?"

Moll briefly recounted her first meeting with the weary wanderer, and the account she gave of herself.

"And thee don't know who she be?"

"I've told thee all I does know," replied Moll, perhaps a little shortly.

To be candid, it was a subject she disliked being questioned upon, perhaps from the fact that she had so very little to say in reply.

"Well, I mon say thee'rt a greenhorn," said the elder woman sagely; "and she's a sharper, see if she ar'n't."

"She's done me as much good as I've done her," replied Moll, stoutly, "and I never seed a good deed throwed away, mother, so we'll talk no more about it."

And Moll resolutely walked into the inner room, determined to change the subject.

From which it will be seen that Mrs. Bolton was scarcely an acquisition, even to this small household.

CHAPTER XXXII.

STRAWS BLOWN BY THE WIND.

Two days after he had proposed, the news of Frank Gresham's engagement to one of his own workwomen was spread pretty well all over the town, and, as ill-luck would have it, the rumor came to his mother's ears.

I have said very little about Mrs. Gresham, simply because she has, up to the present time, taken no active part in the tale which it has been my business to record.

Her history, however, was pretty well known to the inhabitants of Oldham, a fact which shows the disadvantage of living in a town small enough for everybody to know everybody else's pedigree and business.

Even at her present age, with two sons who were not juveniles, she was a fine, stately, well-preserved woman, with pride and ambition clearly marked on her firm, regular features.

As she herself would have given much to hide the fact, I am sorry to be obliged to state that in the days of her youth, her father had kept a small beer-shop or roadside inn, and it was there that her husband, then by no means so rich as he afterwards became, though, even at that time, vastly her superior in the social scale, met, wooed and married her.

Very creditable to all parties, no doubt, especially as the union had been a happy one; and if Mrs. Gresham had not chosen so persistently to ignore the past, no one would have thought of regarding it in any other light than to her credit.

But social ambition was Mrs. Gresham's quicksand, her rock ahead, and this weakness exposed her to much bitter mortification, and also to her inflicting on those she loved an unnecessary amount of misery.

Thankful that she had no daughters to marry, since girls had, it appeared to her, since her own maidenhood, become somewhat of a drug in the market, she looked forward to both of her sons making good, if not aristocratic alliances.

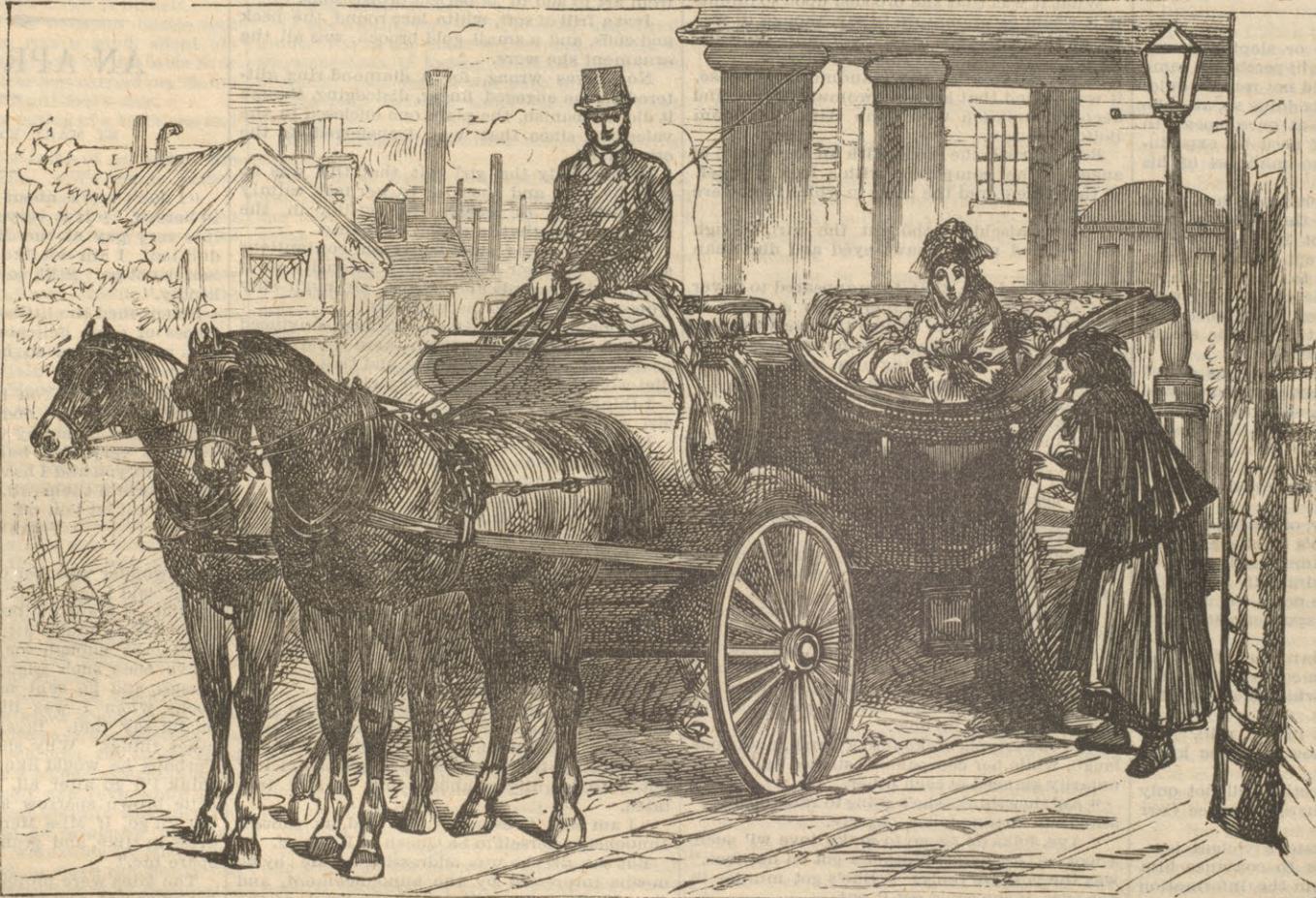
They were wealthy, she urged, therefore they could afford to look for family influence and position in selecting a wife.

It is useless denying the fact that Frank's wild, dissolute and intemperate conduct had occasioned her a great deal of anxiety, even pain, though not by any means as much as a more loving and gentle woman would have felt.

But Mrs. Gresham had faith in her boys—faith that Frank, when he had sown his wild oats, would fulfil her ambitious dreams, marry as she would like him to do, and settle down into a good husband and respectable member of society.

And it really did seem at one time as though all her ambitious hopes and dreams were to be accomplished, for when his engagement with Lady Helen Beltram was announced, she felt, with undue haste, it must be admitted, that her eldest and most doubtful boy was settled, and there was nothing more in that quarter to be desired.

If John, now, would only follow his brother's



"BE IT FLORENCE CARR WHOM YOU WANT?" ASKED THE CRIPPLE."

unnecessary in her opinion to go, and she rightly judged that Frank Gresham was not a man who could appreciate the value of being loved.

A good man, secure in the assurance and conviction of a woman's love, prizes her the more dearly, and would bear anything that the world could inflict, sooner than wound or in any way take a mean or dishonorable advantage of it.

While a bad man, on the contrary, having won the prize, plucks the flower from its stem, and then, soon grown tired of its perfume, casts it away, to die or be trodden upon by any passer by.

Frank Gresham was not a good man, hence the coldness of the woman who had inspired in his heart a fierce passion, rather than an absorbing and enduring love, only goaded him on the more surely and completely to possess her.

Scarcely had the clock on the mantel-piece struck six that evening, when a knock sounded on the door of the cottage in which Moll and Florence resided, and the young cotton spinner, Frank Gresham, entered the room.

I fancy the most nervous of the four persons in the room was the visitor himself.

For he could not forget, when he looked on Moll Arkshaw's and Mrs. Bolton's faces, how deeply and bitterly he had wronged them through the injury done and crime imputed to the man whom they both loved.

On their part, if they did not forget Willie Bolton's fate, they did not think of imputing it to the man before them.

True, they knew he was the prosecutor, but they likewise knew or believed that he was the loser.

That the gold found hidden in Bolton's bed was his, and that, throughout the whole prosecution, he had been as mild and kind as in any way appeared compatible with justice, and his assumed belief in the guilt of the prisoner.

Hence, a great deal of the bitterness which one would otherwise have thought natural for them to feel towards him, was blunted by what appeared palliating circumstances.

Florence looked like some rare exotic, a flower of another and more uncommon order,

sat down at the piano, of which I have before said the room boasted, and began to play and sing an old English ballad.

She had a good voice, and her execution was that of a well-trained, accomplished musician.

"How strange that you sing and play so well," said the young man, really taken by surprise.

"Not at all. I am naturally musical."

"So I should think, and I am glad of it, but I want to talk with you now; won't you come out for a walk with me; it seems that we cannot be here alone."

All this while the fair, white fingers were playing a brilliant and noisy valse.

"Yes, but I must be back early—before ten," was the reply, and the fingers still went on till the air was finished.

"I am going out for a walk, Moll, with Mr. Gresham," she observed, rising from her seat at the instrument, "but I shall not be late."

And, so saying, she went into the next room, candle in hand, to put on her bonnet.

It was only a small black lace affair, made up by her own hands with a few pins and some crimson flowers in the space of a few minutes, but it suited her better than many a French milliner could have made a bonnet do, and the thick cloth jacket, small and simple as it was, only added to her quiet, ladylike appearance.

As far as outward show went, Frank Gresham might be proud to take and introduce her as his wife wherever he went, and he thought so now as he looked at her, watching her pull on her dainty glove; and a throb of exultation swelled in his heart, for he knew that his mother and most of his relatives, friends, and acquaintances would jeer at, perhaps out him, for what they would call his silly, mad infatuation in marrying one of his own work girls.

But he would have the best part of the laugh, he thought, when he showed his wife to them, for this woman was a match for them all; aye, more than a match, for where, among their own vulgar daughters and kinswomen, could they find one in any way to compare with her?

Perhaps he was right as far as externals went, and, could Florence Carr but have blotted out the past and have bathed in the waters of

example and find some patrieian, even if penniless bride, all would be as she herself would have planned it.

But John, though so good and gentle and thoughtful for his mother's comfort, was obstinate, quietly though positively so, and though he listened patiently enough to her plans, utterly declined on so important a matter to himself to execute them.

It may therefore be supposed what a terrible blow it had been to her pride when the engagement between her son and Lady Helen was broken off, and how she had vainly tried to mend or patch it up again.

With the lady and her family positive and unbending and her son glad of his release, her self-imposed task was of course an impossible one, and she was at length obliged to relinquish it in despair.

Still there had been hope, if not of this alliance, at least that her son might make another in all respects equally to her satisfaction.

And with this hope she had tried to console herself.

But now all her airy fabrics were dashed to the ground, that is, supposing the news to be true.

Was it true?

There was the question.

Frank had not been home or slept at home for several days past; he might perchance come that very night, but she could not remain quiet on the mere possibility of his doing so, and she determined to go to the mill at once, speak to him upon the subject, and, if need be, expostulate most strongly upon the madness of his conduct.

So the carriage was ordered and her maid dressed her, for of course the *ci-devant* innkeeper's daughter could not be expected to dress herself; and as she swept down the stairs and through the fine hall to the brougham awaiting her, she felt capable of crushing with a glance, or one step of her proud foot, the daring and low-born aspirant to be the sharer of her son's name and position.

When the carriage in which she was seated drove up to the door of the counting-house and private entrance to the mill, she was informed that the master was out—gone into Manchester, the clerk who came to the door thought, and of course the man could not, with any degree of certainty, say when his master would return.

Mrs. Gresham hesitated.

It was beneath her dignity, of course, to question this man about her son's habits and proceedings, yet at the same time her impetuous anger and not too careful training in her youth urged her to do what a more noble and upright-minded woman would have spurned with scorn and disdain.

"There is a young woman that my son's name has been mentioned in connection with," she said, her cheek meanwhile flushing with shame at her own meanness.

"One that used to work in the mill," she added; "perhaps does so now; do you know where she lives?"

Now the man knew perfectly well not only who she meant, but also where Florence Carr resided.

He likewise knew his master's violent temper, and needed no assurance to convince him that if he gave Mrs. Gresham the information she required, his own situation, if it came to Frank Gresham's ears, would not be worth a day's purchase.

The only refuge open to him, therefore, was the plea of ignorance, which, too, he stoutly maintained, adding, as an additional plea—

"You see, mum, there's so many young women comes to the mill, and I don't know any of them."

"Of course you don't, but this girl's name is Carr—Florence Carr—I should think you have heard of it."

"I may have done, though I don't remember; but shall I call the foreman, mum?—since you know her name, her address will be sure to be in his books."

"Couldn't you get to look at them without asking him?" inquired the great lady, feeling, it is to be hoped, a little ashamed of herself.

But the man was too wary; he had heard far too much of Mrs. Gresham's character to think of placing his present position and future prospects at her mercy, or dependent upon her discretion, justice, or gratitude.

So he replied in the negative, starting off almost before he was told to do so for the foreman, glad enough to shift the responsibility of satisfying the imperious lady upon him.

Scarcely had he left the carriage door in obedience to Mrs. Gresham's order when a small, deformed and crippled girl hobbled to the side of the carriage, by which indeed she had for the last few minutes been standing, and asked, in a cracked voice—

"Be it Florence Carr whoam yo' want?"

"Yes."

"Eigh, I'll tell 'ee where 'tis. Thee'll find her at the first o' Gretty's Cottages in Mud Lane."

"Tell the coachman, and that's for yourself."

So saying Mrs. Gresham threw the cripple a shilling and leaned back in her carriage, glad to have got what she was in search of without an appeal to the foreman, for that worthy man was neither the most pliable or manageable person in the world.

Consequently when the foreman came down to the yard, the carriage and Mrs. Gresham had alike disappeared, somewhat, it must be confessed, to his relief.

"Aw thinks aw've done her a turn," muttered the girl who had volunteered the information, and whom you have no doubt recognised as Jem, Moll Arkshaw's late servant.

"Meary o' Swiney's be in a fluster, and she'll gi'e Florence such a dusting as she'll na forget in a day."

"To think," she went on, after a pause, "o' that lass being a rich woman and having her carriage to ride in and her silks to wear, she as I remembers white as a boggart and ready to die wi' being clemmed. There were summut queer about her as I never quite maked out. I wish I could find it out, for, oh, I hates her like pisen!"

More than poison, I should imagine, especially if the dose were to be swallowed by an enemy.

And Jem trudged off homewards.

In no hurry to get there, if one may judge from the way in which she loitered about.

Indeed Jem had been out looking for work—uselessly looking for it—up to this time, at least, and her grandmother, the white witch, was apt to express her opinions pretty freely upon those who would eat and not work.

Consequently Jem was in no great hurry to get home, and she trudged along thoughtfully with something resting like a heavy weight upon her mind, which she was too cautious even to frame in words to herself.

What it was that she brooded upon so intently it would be premature to say, though it was destined to influence the lives of more than one person connected with this narrative.

When she reached her grandmother's house, it was to find that amiable woman in close and deep conversation with John Barker, William Bolton's cousin.

Both started, the crone with an expression of anger and her companion with a look of relief, as the girl entered the room in which they were sitting.

"More mischief," thought the girl, though she seemed more heavy-eyed and dull than usual.

She noticed, too, that John appeared to cower and shiver, even while there was a gleam of defiance in his eye, as though the hag was compelling him to do something he was averse to and dreaded, or refusing him some request which he was anxiously preferring.

"Another kettle o' fish boiling," thought the girl again.

But she made no comment, and only answered her grandmother's savage question as to whether or not she had obtained work by a meek negative.

"Then what's ye bin doin' wi' youssen?" was the next imperative demand.

The girl hesitated, then said, with something like defiance, though her sharp eyes watched the faces of her listeners keenly—

"Aw saw Meary o' Swiney's, the spinner's mother, at the mill, axing where Florence Carr lived, and they would na tell her, for Frank's in Manchester, and they're feared on him, I s'pose, so I up and told her, and she's gone off in her carriage to see her new daughter, but she do na look loving no how."

And the cripple broke into a harsh, malicious laugh, while her companions started and involuntarily glanced at each other.

"An' thee thinks she's going to rate the lass?" asked the fortune teller, eagerly.

"Aye, folks do na go to make love wi' such a look as Gresham's mother's got on her face," was the positive reply. "She's got murder in her eyes, if she could get it out."

"Eigh, weel, lass. It be her business and none o' ours; thee mun be nigh clemmed; here, go to the butcher's and get theeseen summut for thee tea; thou'st had no dinner, 'ave yo'?"

"Noa," was the reply, "and I be nigh clemmed."

And so saying, she took the few copper coins and left the room.

She did not go direct to the butcher's shop, however.

On the contrary, she did not leave the house, but going to the front door, she opened and closed it noisily herself on the inside; and then, creeping like a cat, she made her way into the small kitchen or washhouse behind the room in which the two worthies were sitting, and, opening a large cupboard here, she entered it, and applying eyes and ears to an aperture in the wall formed by the removal of two or three bricks, was enabled not only to hear, but to see what was taking place in the room beyond.

Little did the two plotters dream how they were being overreached by this seemingly half-witted girl.

Had they known of her cunning trick, her life would certainly not have been worth a dozen hours' purchase.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A COUPLE OF CATS.

"Does a young woman named Florence Carr live here?"

The question was asked in a loud, imperative tone, and Mrs. Gresham, who had stepped from her carriage and stood there with her rich silk dress ostentatiously trailing on the door step, seemed to tower over and to a great extent overwhelm poor Mrs. Bolton, who had answered her imperious knock.

"Yes, ma'am; will you walk in?"

And the woman who had been robbed of her only child by the villany of the son of the fine lady before, her stood aside for the visitor to enter.

Florence was in the room, sitting by a small table, working upon some pretty trifle of lace, cambric and ribbons, preparing, no doubt, for her wedding day.

For Frank Gresham was in a hurry to call her his own, and had insisted upon her discontinuing at once her work at the mill.

Very simple, pretty, and ladylike she looked this afternoon, like some strange and rare bird in an unsuitable and common cage, and, had Mrs. Gresham been one whit more polished and refined herself, she would have admitted it and shrunk from the scene she had come prepared and determined to make.

Had she known too what a match this girl was for her with her precocious worldly wisdom, her keen, unscrupulous intellect, and thorough knowledge of much that she herself was ignorant of, she would have shrunk from the encounter, or at least have thought twice before engaging in it.

As it was, indeed, for a moment she paused and hesitated.

She was not prepared for so much conscious dignity and quiet refinement as that which seemed natural to this girl.

The utmost simplicity characterised the girl's dress.

There was none of the glaring, flaunting combination of colors sufficient to make one's eyes ache and set one's teeth on edge that was even visible in Mrs. Gresham's own attire.

A black merino dress, destitute of trimming, but fitting a figure which needed no assistance from art to add to its perfect proportions.

Just a frill of soft, white lace round the neck and cuffs, and a small gold brooch, was all the ornament she wore.

No; I was wrong, for a diamond ring glittered on the engaged finger, dislodging, though it did not banish, the plain one enclosed in the valentine, since that was transferred to the other hand.

Instinctively the girl felt that this was no friendly visit, and she rose to her feet, calmly and proudly, to receive her visitor in the same spirit as that in which she came.

There are many quiet fights and contentions as deadly in their feelings and intensity as if fought with swords and pistols, although only women's voices are the weapons.

One glance at Mrs. Gresham's face convinced Florence that between them there could be no peace—nay, not even a truce, and that the conflict would clearly be death or victory.

I think the consciousness of this armed the girl, and gave her courage.

It was a novelty; a little excitement.

There had been too much sameness in Frank Gresham's courtship.

But here was opposition.

Determined, positive opposition.

"You wished to see me?" she asked with the calm grace and self-possession which a duchess might have assumed in receiving a doubtful guest.

"I did," was the fierce and somewhat tragic reply.

"Pardon me, but I have not the pleasure of knowing you."

"No; but you know my son."

"Possibly, but as I do not know who your son may be, I am scarcely anything the wiser."

This was said with such a provokingly sweet, easy, even patronising manner, that the visitor felt both slightly snubbed and greatly irritated.

"I am Mrs. Gresham," she said, as though announcing herself to be Queen of England.

But the girl she was addressing seemed by no means impressed by the announcement, and she simply said, with a slight bend of the head—

"Indeed; I am happy to see you. Won't you take a seat?"

"No."

The tone of voice in which this little word of two letters was uttered baffled description.

Poor Mrs. Bolton, who had been standing meekly by, gave a decided jump of fear and surprise.

The coachman, waiting with the carriage in the lane heard it, and remarked to the footman, with a sly wink, that the wind was rising.

They all knew at Bankside what Mrs. Gresham's voice in that tone portended.

Indeed, the only person unmoved by it was the very one whom it was expected to frighten.

Instead of being alarmed, Florence only smiled, and remarked—

"I daresay you are tired of sitting with coming in a carriage, but you will, I hope, excuse me."

And so saying, she resumed her seat at the table, and took up the lace upon which she had been working.

"Insolence!" exclaimed Mrs. Gresham, literally exploding with fury.

The black eyebrows which shaded those deep blue eyes were deliberately elevated.

There might even have been a shrug of the rounded shoulders to accompany them.

But the voice was calm, and cold, and cutting which said—

"I did not say so. Pray, do not be so hasty in stigmatising your own conduct."

This was too much for Mrs. Gresham.

She must either have flown at the object of her fury and torn her to pieces—at least, have attempted it—or given way and sunk down, overwhelmed with horror and disgust.

Being somewhat stout and portly, as well as tall, and doubtful as to the success of an attempt at the value of physical strength, the mill owner's mother sank into a chair.

"I want to know," she said, as soon as she could recover breath and overcome her indignation, "if the ridiculous tale I have heard is true—that my son Frank, your master"—and she sneered as she emphasised the word—"is going to marry you?"

"Since you are so interested in the subject," replied the girl, with a sneer, which was quite

equal in intensity to that of her visitor, "I would advise you to question your son. It will then be quite time enough to come here and catechise me."

"Then you deny it?"

"On the contrary, I decline to discuss it."

"But I insist upon knowing."

"You can insist upon whatever you like, but I suppose your son is of age, is he not?"

"Of age; yes, he is of age, and old enough to make a fool of himself with a painted doll like you."

But Florence only laughed a low, musical laugh, as she said, derisively—

"Then you don't admire his taste?"

"Admire his taste," exclaimed the woman, getting really venomous in her passion. "If you were an honest woman, it would be different, but you, who are —"

"You had better be careful," said Florence, warningly, and holding up her hand, on which glittered the diamonds.

"Your words may be actionable," she went on, "Mrs. Bolton is there as a witness, and be assured that I never receive an insult without making the giver pay for it."

(To be continued.)

AN APRIL-FOOL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"I don't know about it," said Lucy Pengare to herself. "It is very dull here, of course, and it is very gay at the Malcoms'; but then I'm dull too. I am not like those gay folks, and I'd better not go. Still, somehow Bessie writes so kindly."

She opened the little pink note, in which the traces of some delicate perfume yet lingered, and read it over to herself, in a murmuring tone:

"DEAR LUCY: You half promised to spend this week with me, and I hold you to your word. I should not be happy without you. Miss Montclair is very nice, but we are not such close friends as you and I have been, and you will help me entertain them all. Charlie told me that I must not let you off."

Yours as ever,

BESSIE MALCOM."

"I wonder whether Charlie Malcom did say that," said Lucy. "It was out of kindness, if he did. I know he likes Miss Montclair. He pays her so much attention, and of course I don't care enough for him to be jealous; but we've been such friends. One likes to have friends, and he sent me bunches of roses and books when I was ill, and I'd like to think he did say that. Bessie tells the truth about other things. Why should she fib about this. Perhaps he would like to have me come. I think I'll go after all. Of course I shall be a little brown sparrow among those fine birds, but I'll go, if Miss Merlin only will finish my dress in time, and grandma is well enough to spare me."

The fates were propitious to Lucy's visit. She got off at last, and was set down, trunk and all, at the Malcoms' gate, one windy March night—a night that suddenly seemed brighter than any in the month of June, when a figure just dimly seen in the dusky evening opened the gate and came out, and a voice that she knew to be Charlie Malcom's said:

"I have been waiting here ever since I saw the stage lamp down the road yonder. I felt sure you were coming in it. Give me your little basket. Jack, attend to Miss Pengare's trunk. This way, Lucy."

He kept her hand in his a moment before he offered his arm. He looked into her face as he spoke, bending his head a little to bring his face closer to hers.

Poor little Lucy! She did like Charlie Malcom so very much. If only that five minute walk along the smooth path under the tall trees, could have lasted forever, she would have asked no more.

Bessie met her friend at the gate, and took her at once to her own room to take her things off. She was the only lady of the house, this bright Bessie, and she was called away by an angry-faced cook the next moment, and there were two ladies in the room who were strangers to Lucy, who were evidently touching themselves up before dinner, and who talked hard and fast to each other the while.

"Miss Montclair is handsome," said one.

"Nothing so very wonderful," said the other

"as far as I can see; but she's showy and musical, and all that, and he can't do better. She's of a good old family."

"Excellent," said the first. "I presume it is settled. They are always paired off together, somehow. Rich men always marry rich girls. People like to lay money in a warm nest, you know. That was a saying in my part of the world when I was a girl, and it is true every where. It's not a bad match for Charlie Malcom."

Then they fluttered out of the room together, and left the glass to Lucy. She did not care much for it now. Life looked very dull to her, and her own face very plain—a dispirited little face, with all the color gone from it, and with a pitiful sort of quiver in the chin that she could not help for her life. Lucy always began to cry with her chin, as babies do.

"I won't," she said, pressing her palms against her eyelids. "I won't. I ought to be

glad that I am sure of what I guessed before." Then she brushed her soft brown hair, tied on her fresh blue cravat, and buttoned her snowy cuffs, and was ready.

A simple girl, with fresh, quick feelings, is at a disadvantage with women of society. Even at her happiest, Lucy would have felt shy and bashful in the circle to which she was introduced; but with a weight of youthful trouble on her heart, she was conscious of being even awkward.

Miss Montclair was introduced, and smiled graciously. Lucy tried to smile also. It was a vain attempt. She was overwhelmed by the thought of the other woman's happy lot.

Miss Montclair sat in a great arm-chair in a graceful, easy attitude. Charles Malcom stood near her. At first he was talking to all the ladies, but Miss Montclair soon claimed him for her own. She wanted to know all about the people in the photograph album. And so he sat beside her, and they laughed and whispered for an hour. Bessie, though almost as simple in her manner as Lucy, was not bashful. She kept the old ladies in chat, and tried to include Lucy, but Lucy took refuge in an album. She asked nobody to tell her "all about it," and I doubt if she could have told much about it herself.

At dinner-time she sat between Bessie and old Mr. Malcom, who was a kind, silent old man. Down at the other end of the table ever so much brilliant chatter was carried on. Some one was talking about April-fool's day.

Miss Montclair was telling of a trick she had played on some one.

"Charlie always fools some of us before the day is over," said Bessie. "We try to punish him, not always with success."

"I shall be here on the first of April," said Miss Montclair. "I dare you to try your tricks on me."

"Don't dare me to any thing; you don't know what might come of it," said Charlie. And Miss Montclair flashed him back a look that spoke volumes.

Later in the evening, Charlie sat by Lucy's side and tried to entertain her. He was not so merry as with Miss Montclair; and he told Lucy that she was not looking well. His voice was gentle, his smile soft, but Lucy was very stern with herself. She would not be pleased with these things. This man belonged to another woman. It was not for her to be happy in his courtesies.

Then Miss Montclair sang, and Charlie turned the music; and while she was singing, Lucy whispered to Bessie that she was tired and sleepy, and ran away and went to bed. For hours she lay awake and heard the voices in the parlor, the music, the chatter, the clink of wine glasses and plates afterward. And her pillow was wet with the hot tears a girl must shed over a broken love dream.

So the visit began. Lucy had heard of Tantalus, but she did not know much about him. Some of his tortures, however, she suffered. To be with Charlie so much, and yet so far from him; to have at times a glance, a word, a touch that thrilled her through, and yet to know it all meant nothing! To feel that life was empty if he did not love her; to be somehow very sure that he could love her were it not for Miss Montclair's existence; and to have the pretty picture of Miss Montclair in her most fascinating mood perpetually before her eyes!

"Oh!" said Lucy, to herself, as the slow days dragged on, "why did I ever come here? Why have I not energy enough to get away? Charlie ought not to be so kind to me when he cares so little for me."

Yet she had not the courage to go, lest Bessie should suspect the reason; lest Miss Montclair should guess it; nay, lest even Charlie himself might know. Meantime Miss Montclair had her own anxieties.

The windy March days blew away somehow, and April was at hand. She came in characteristically, with a dash of rain against the window-panes.

Lucy opened her eyes, and, as had become her wont, sighed and closed them again. The daybreak used to be a happy thing to her, she remembered, but it only brought pain now. For a few moments she lay quite still. Then the break bell rang sharply.

"I must get up, I suppose," she said.

And her two white feet touched the red carpet, and she stood in her pretty dishabille, putting her soft hair away from her eyes, and staring hard at the door, under which a little white angle was gradually growing larger. It was plain, in a moment more, that some one was pushing a letter under it from outside. Then a light, free step, that she well knew, sounded on the stairs, and she ran quickly forward, and picked up the note and tore it open, and read as follows:

"DEAR LUCY,—I have not been able to talk to you all this week. I must have an interview with you. I leave home to-day, and will not be back for two months. Will you let me see you alone in the music-room, while the rest are at breakfast?"

Yours ever,

"CHARLES MALCOM."

Suddenly the world grew bright to little Lucy. A radiance in her eyes, a flush in her cheeks, a softness about her mouth, made an altered picture in the looking-glass, when she braided up her hair with a bonny blue ribbon. Meet him in the music-room! Oh, what could Charlie mean to say?

There came a tap at the door the next minute. She thought it was Bessie who tapped, and opened the door quickly. In glided Miss Montclair. Her eye caught the note upon the dressing-table as quickly as though she had been looking for it. Perhaps she was.

"My dear Miss Lucy," she said, with a smile, "I hope you don't forget that this is the first of April!"

"I did forget," said Lucy.

"And Charlie Malcom has not," said Miss Montclair. "He is such a tease! If I were you, I'd—I'd not take any notice of a note, or anything of the sort, that he may send you. I shall scold him for trying to play tricks on you, you good, innocent little soul."

All the color faded from Lucy's face on the instant.

"There is no need to trouble yourself, Miss Montclair," she said. "I am not quite so easily deceived as you think. I know an April trick when I see it."

Then she stooped to lace her gaiter, and kept her back to Miss Montclair until she was gone. Of all her pain this was the worst; of all her trouble this was the greatest. That Charlie should try to make an April-fool of her in this wise, seemed more than she could bear.

She did not even pass the parlor door on her way down to breakfast. She slipped down the back stairs, and she said to the servant who was dusting the hall:

"When the stage passes, stop it, please. I am going home to-day."

"I am waiting for Charlie's trick," said Bessie innocently, as she entered the room. "He always succeeds in fooling some one on the first of April. Last year it was papa himself."

"He may fail this time," said Lucy scornfully.

Miss Montclair smiled, and shrugged her shoulders.

In spite of Bessie's entreaties, Lucy's trunk was in the porch when the stage passed, and she took her seat within the vehicle without delay.

"You have been so kind," she said to Bessie. "I have enjoyed myself."

Somebody else hailed the stage also, but it was an outside passenger. Lucy was glad of that. Perhaps Charlie Malcom was ashamed of himself, for he did not speak to her, or even bow, as he clambered to the roof; but Miss Montclair waved her kerchief from the piazza, and it may have been his whole attention was absorbed by that.

The stage rattled on. Lucy could not cry, for there were two or three other passengers. Her heart was very heavy, and she did not much care what became of her. She wondered how she could keep on hiding all her trouble from her grandparents; how she could bear it when news of his wedding came to her. She should never marry—never. She should die an old maid.

"Good Lord have mercy on us!" suddenly cried an old gentleman opposite her.

"Jump out!" cried one woman.

"Sit still!" screamed another.

Something tramped and rumbled close at hand; a shrill whistle filled the air; the driver yelled to his horses; the stage was whirled backward and overset on its side; and before Lucy lost consciousness she was aware that a long train of steam-cars had rushed by, and that the stage had just escaped it.

"Lucy, little Lucy."

Some one whispered this in her ear, some one who held her in his strong arms as he might a baby. She opened her eyes, and saw Charlie Malcom's face close against hers.

"Are you much hurt?" he asked.

"I think not," she said. "And you are safe. Is any one killed?"

"No," said Charlie. "We have been in fearful danger, but there are only a few bruises and slight cuts to show for it. We missed the train by one yard. Did you know that, Lucy?"

"Yes," said Lucy. "I think I can stand now, Mr. Malcom."

She was beginning to remember. So was he. He put her down, and offered her his arm. She declined it, and leaned against a tree. Then the man looked at her long and earnestly, and suddenly drew close to her again, and said softly:

"Lucy, did you find my note?"

"I did," she said. "Did you believe that I was such a—"

"Such a what, Lucy?" asked Charlie.

"I knew it was an April-fool trick from the first, and I had not the least intention of meeting you 'while the rest were at breakfast,' on the first of April, I assure you, even had Miss Montclair had not told me," fibbed Lucy.

"The first of April! Is it the first of April? Hang it! I forgot," cried Charlie. "But why did you tell Miss Montclair?"

"I didn't," said Lucy. "She, I—I don't know. I—thought—it was April-fool day, you know."

"Lucy," said Charles Malcom, "a gentleman does not play a trick like that on a lady. I wanted to say something to you. Perhaps you guess what it is. Shall I make an April-fool of myself if I say it now?"

Then he said it.

The indignation meeting of the bruised passengers was over. The stage was all right again. "All aboard," yelled the driver. Charlie helped Lucy in, but this time sat beside her; and oh, what a happy journey it was, through budding woods and lanes, and past the pleasant fields, back to grandmamma's!

If Miss Montclair felt that she had played a trick and failed in it, she kept her own counsel; and when Lucy was married, sent her a bouquet and her congratulations. And many an April has come with smiles and tears since that time, and still I am sure that Lucy and her husband would both declare that on All-Fools'-day they committed the wisest action of their lives.

show all "JONES," a small about of the South alone.] [The following little story, with its moral, though written for the Macon (Ga.) Telegraph, is quite too good to be enjoyed by the farmers of the South alone.]

I know a man and he lived in Jones— Which Jones is a country of red hills and stones, And he lived pretty much by getting of loans, And his mules were nothing but skin and bones, And his hogs were as flat as his corn-pones, And he had 'bout a thousand acres of land.

This man—and his name was also Jones— He swore that he'd leave them old red hills and stones, For he couldn't make nothing but yellowish cotton, And little of that, and his fences were rotten, And what little corn he had, that was boughten, And he couldn't get a living from the land.

And the longer he swore the madder he got, And he rose and he walked to the stable lot, And he halloed to Tom to come there and hitch For to emigrate somewhere where land was rich, And to quit raising cock-burrs, thistles and sich, And wasting their time on barren land.

So him and Tom they hitched up the mules, Protasting that folks were mighty big fools That 'ud stay in Georgia their life time out, Just scratching a living, when all of them mought Get places in Texas, where cotton would sprout By the time you could plant it in the land.

And he drove by a house where a man named Brown Was living, not far from the edge of the town, And he bantered Brown for to buy his place, And said that seeing as money was skace, And seeing as sheriff's were hard to face, Two dollars an acre would get the land.

They closed at a dollar and fifty cents, And Jones he bought him a wagon and tents, And loaded his corn and his women and truck, And moved to Texas, which it took His entire pile, with the best of luck, To get there and get him a little land.

But Brown moved out on the old Jones farm, And he rolled up his breeches and bared his arm, And he picked all the rocks from off'n the ground, And he rooted it up and ploughed it down, And sowed his corn and wheat in the land.

Five years glided by, and Brown, one day, (Who had got so fat that he wouldn't weigh) Was a sitting down, sorter lazily To the grandest dinner you ever did see, When one of the children jumped on his knee And says, "Yan's Jones, which you bought his land."

And there was Jones standing out at the fence, And he hadn't no wagon, nor mules, nor tents, For he had left Texas afoot and come To Georgia to see if he couldn't get some Employment, and he was looking as humble As if he had never owned any land.

But Brown he asked him in, and he set Him down to his victuals smoking hot, And when he filled himself and the floor, Brown looked at him sharp and rose and swore That "whether men's land was rich or poor, There was more in the man than there was in the land."

COLOR.

As the tropical countries are those in which the ardent power of the sun calls forth the most brilliant colors both in the vegetable and in the animal world; and as the amount of land near the Equator is proportionately so much larger in the old than in the new hemisphere; so it is chiefly to the former that we are accustomed to look for examples of brilliancy of color. In Brazil and the West Indies, and no doubt in many a deathly swamp untrod by the white man's foot, humming-birds and butterflies may vie with the sunbeam in lustre. But the animals of the Old World, for the most part, occupy a higher place than those of the New. Among African birds, the simple combination of red and black, as in the case of the Bateleur eagle and the Barbary pigeon, forms one of the most perfect lessons in coloring to be found in the great book of nature.

The sun has not only clothed his favorite children, the natives of the equatorial regions, with special glory of coloring, but has imparted to the human races that can bear his beams, as if in recompense for the bronzing or blackening of their skins, a special instinct in the application of color. Black, indeed, is not the actual hue with which he tints the African. The negro infant, at birth, is of a dull cherry-red, and this color, darkened to the extreme, is that which he bears through life. In the north of Africa exists a splendid race, with aquiline noses, and true hair, the youthful members of which resemble Greek statues in bronze. The North

American Indians are of a real copper hue. But we are not referring to the color of the skin, set off as it is by lustrous hair, and by eyes that resemble stars, to be met with in Eastern travel. We are referring to the rare subtlety with which the textures of Eastern fabrics are wrought as concerns their color. Quaint forms of pine, or shell, or pyramid, so conventionalised, ages ago, as to convey no meaning in themselves, are made the vehicle for such harmonies and contrasts of color, now full and bright, now subdued into magical semi-tones, as to leave the European colorist absolutely nowhere. It is the same in the porcelain of Persian or Moorish origin. It is the same in the glorious stained windows through which the daylight has to struggle before it can kiss the most sacred spot in the world,—the mystic Sakhrak Rock, under the shadowing dome of the mosque of Omar. Wherever Oriental taste deals with color, the result is like that of Nature herself. One exception, alas! we noticed in the Indian display at the Kensington Exhibition of 1872. The cheap aniline dyes have reached the Indian market. There is a quasi metallic lustre in their colors, that is, after a little time, extremely wearying to the eye. The vulgarisation of the Oriental work that results from their introduction into Indian tissues is indescribable.

The beauty and vitality with which the painter clothes his work, when he is a master of color, can be only very faintly echoed by the engraver, although he makes a technical use of the word, and translates the hues of the canvas, to some extent, by his wonderful monochrome. But it is very striking to observe the utter failure of photography to produce anything like a good engraving, when the camera is applied directly to a polychromatic object, such as a highly colored picture. This difficulty is not to be overcome by skill,—it is an inherent chemical condition. The only rays that chemically affect the negative are those of the blue end of the spectrum. Red light and yellow light are invisible in photography, except in so far as they may contain a small portion of bluelight. If a richly-colored painting, in which these three colors are boldly introduced, is exposed to the camera, the dark blues will look white in the image, and the yellow will be turned to black. Thus, while photography may be a great aid to the engraver, it can never be a rival—never other than a servant, when monochrome is left behind. The magnificent picture by Gustave Doré, representing Christ leaving the Prætorium, which attracts so large and so hushed, almost awed, an attendance to the Gallery in Bond-street, is thus being reproduced for the engraver. The picture has been photographed, and the photograph enlarged, to the size of the intended engraving. On this photograph, printed of course but lightly, an artist is engaged to color after the original. From this the engraver will work, employing the aid of photography to give absolute accuracy to his forms, and then using the instinct of his art to translate the color. This is the true method. A mechanical process may be called in to aid the living artist, but it can never rival nor supersede, his genius—when, indeed, genius is present.

But the point where the command over color is lost by the painter is what we call its play. In all the magnificence of nature, in all cases where color, either of a splendid or of a gloomy tone, produces the most powerful impression on the mind, it does so by the aid of nature. The most glorious sunrise would lose the greater part of its charm if the evanescence of its hues could be arrested. Nothing can make up, to the human imagination, for the absence of life. When color is avowedly absent, as in pure sculpture, an order of emotion is excited which is not altogether sensuous. The imagination gives life to the statue, if it be one on which the potentiality of life has been impressed by the sculptor. The seated figure on the Medici tomb is not regarded by any cultured observer as a piece of marble. The grand Idea of Michael Angelo scowls from under that shadowy casque; and it needs but little effort on the part of the awe-stricken spectator to attribute a ghostly life to the figure. With a painting this is altogether different. We are not speaking now of human expression, or even of the expression of animal life given by such magic pencils as those of Landseer and Rosa Bonheur. We are speaking of the harmony of color. With reference to this, nothing can make up for the want of that constant interchange which is the result of motion. The very constitution of the optical powers of man involves this law. Thus we may partly account for the intoxicating influence excited over the minds of many, if not of all, by spectacle. If we can make abstraction, of that common sympathy which is so remarkable an incident of all great assemblages of people, and if we select instances where the intellectual interest is low, or is fictitious, as in the case of a well-known play, there yet remains a powerful effect on the imagination which is due to color,—to bright light, sumptuous dresses, flaming jewels, and all the external movement and glitter of a stately assembly or well-dressed crowd.—*Builder.*

The following notice was recently found posted on the doors of the Arkansas Senate chamber: "Job work executed with economy and dispatch."

A speaker before a temperance society one Sunday evening expressed the broad conviction that "next to Beelzebub himself, Bacchus, inventor of spirituous beverages, brought more sin and misery on the human race than any other individual of whom Scripture gives us any account."

A REPLY TO "MOLLIE DARLING."

BY T. H. W.

Yes, I love thee, Willie, darling,
I'll believe you ever true;
Constant as the star of morning
I will ever be to you.
Willie, never doubt I love thee,
Let your arms around me twine
Let my head rest on thy bosom
While I promise to be thine.

Believe thou not, my Willie, darling,
That aught can turn my heart from thee
From the morning, at its dawning,
Till the eve, I'll think of thee.
In my dreams thou'rt ever present,
There thy manly form is seen,
There thy countenance ever pleasant,
Appears so heavenly and serene.

Where'er you roam, my Willie, darling,
My thoughts will ever rest on thee;
Hoping that when far from Mollie,
You'll give some passing thought to me.
Take my hand, my Willie, darling,
While my heart beats loud for you;
Swear to me, my only darling,
That to me you'll e'er be true.

THE GYPSY'S LEGACY.

"Oh! don't, don't! I didn't do it. I tell you it wasn't I!"—and the distressed cries of denial and entreaty increased in violence.

The scene was in a town in the Far West; and as Mr. Hastings approached the crowd assembled about the court-house, elbowing his way along, he came to where some of the rabble were holding a boy, while others were preparing to administer a flogging. The boy was dressed in the most picturesque costume; a scarlet flannel blouse, handsomely braided and belted with a broad leather girdle, a pair of zouave pantaloons of the same material, white stockings, and black cloth gaiters, a broad, white sailor-collared turned down in the neck, fastened with a broad blue ribbon. A scarlet cap, also braided with black, from which depended a long, swaying tassel, surmounted a handsome head of jet black hair, hanging in long, glossy curls. His features were small, his complexion dark and ruddy. His eyes were the large, black, luminous Italian. But he had been dragged and buffeted by the crowd until his picturesque attire was sadly disarranged.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded Mr. Hastings, in a deep and commanding voice, and the large eyes were instantly turned in entreaty upon the speaker.

"Oh! he's one of them gypsies that have camped for the winter down at Melford Springs," was the answer.

"What of that? Why should he be abused because he happens to belong to that unfortunate race?" demanded Clarence Hastings.

"He belongs to the biggest set of thieves unhung. They have been stealing by wholesale already. The night before last I lost a lot of chickens, and we won't stand any more such nonsense."

"But how do you know that this boy was the thief? Did you catch him in the act?"

"No, Mr. Hastings. I defy you to catch one of the varmints at any of their mischief."

"Then why not let this child go? Surely he ought not to suffer for the sins of the tribe, who are older and no doubt his teachers."

At this moment another of the crowd spoke. "I say, Mr. Hastings, you just go home if you're too tender-hearted. We're going to baste this fellow's red jacket for him, and send him back to the gang to tell what's in store for them, if they don't move their quarters."

Hastings stepped forward and placed his hand upon the boy's shoulder, flourishing his cane ominously, and again addressed them.

"What do you call yourselves but cowards? A full score of men bent upon beating one small boy of scarcely twelve years! It is an outrage, and one I will not permit! So let me pass!"

The crowd fell back and slung off, while the boy was led away by his deliverer.

"I will see you safely to your people, my child," continued Hastings, "for I think they need a word of warning."

"Oh, sir, you are so kind. I did not steal," replied the boy with a grateful glance, which showed the fine lines of his face, and his eyes filled with tears.

"I hope you did not."

"I tell you I didn't. Don't you believe me?" returned the lad, impatiently.

"Certainly, and I am glad to do so," and he placed his hand caressingly upon his head.

"They, down there, thought that our people set me on to do such things; but I tell you nobody among them asks me to do anything."

"Why so?"

"Because I belong to old Zilla."

"Who is she?"

"My grandmother. She is very wise, and was once very beautiful. They all mind her."

"She is, then, the queen of your tribe?"

"Yes; but she is ill now, and I am afraid she will die some day."

The speaking face of the child assumed such a pathetic expression as to touch the heart of Mr. Hastings, and he followed him in silence for the rest of the way, which seemed interminable. Yet it was very much shortened by

the lad's taking a path through the woods which brought them to an overhanging cliff above the gipsy encampment, where the most picturesque sight presented itself.

In a deep, shaded glen, one protected by the high, pine-crowned bluffs from the fierce, cold, and rude blasts of winter, a band of wandering gypsies had pitched their tents. From out of the rocks leading down into this little valley bubbled a succession of springs which bore the owner's name—that of Melford. And so romantic and beautiful was the situation, that it had become a favorite place of resort during the summer months for pic-nic parties and seekers after rural pleasure.

As Clarence Hastings paused, he drank in at a glance the singularly beautiful scene beneath. Autumn had hung her gorgeous colors upon the hill tops and tinted the grass in the valley, where, in a half circle, were pitched a few white tents, which, with a couple of covered waggons, formed the homes of this strangely wandering people. A huge fire was burning beneath a great iron kettle, in which was bubbling a stew, with its savory odors spreading abroad, reaching even Mr. Hastings, who did not doubt it came from his neighbor's missing chickens.

By the entrances to the tents, or in groups about the grass, were scattered men, women and children, arrayed in dusty, faded garments, which revealed exposure to both the sun and rain. They all presented an appearance so unlike that of the gaily dressed, cleanly boy by his side, that he could not imagine him to belong to the strange company.

Farther up the valley were tethered several sleek, fat horses, testifying to the ample provision secured by their masters along the route. A couple of great, gaunt bloodhounds finished the inventory.

"Come," said the boy, after Hastings had contemplated the scene for a brief time, "follow me; I want old Zilla to see and thank you for saving me from those wretches."

He led the way down the rocky path into the astonished encampment. The dogs barked, the men scowled, and the children flew like startled partridges to their weird-looking mothers, as Clarence Hastings followed his handsome young conductor through the dusky groups. At the entrance of one of the tents he paused. The opening of it was concealed by a thick, faded, scarlet curtain.

"Wait a moment," whispered the boy, and disappeared behind the screen.

A murmur of voices followed for a time, and then he returned and conducted Mr. Hastings into the presence of old Zilla.

Reclining upon a couch of straw, covered with a piece of gaudily-flowered druggery, and propped up with pillows, was the most singular being Hastings had ever beheld. She was tall and gaunt, with a pale face, deeply seamed, and the most remarkable coal-black eyes, which still bore the fulness and lustre of early youth. A profusion of hair, white as snow, lay drifted from her head. A long robe, with richly brocaded flowers upon a purple ground—once costly and gorgeous, but now tattered and faded—covered her wasted form. As soon as she spoke, Hastings noticed that her language like that of the lad he had rescued from the mob, was singularly free from bad grammar or vulgarity.

"Welcome, sir," she said, with a faint attempt to rise, but sinking back either from weakness or pain. "Paul tells me you saved him from the torture and indignity of a beating, and old Zilla thanks you."

"It is nothing," replied Hastings. "I but obeyed the dictates of common humanity. But I have intruded myself upon your people in order to give them some friendly advice."

"Your motive, sir, I doubt not, is a kind one; yet we do not like to listen to preaching. A kind act goes much further with us than words."

"I have only to say my good woman, that this poor boy was very near paying the penalty of some of the lawlessness of your people. I only wish to warn them of the resentment and bitterness such a course will bring upon them."

"Thank you kindly, sir. But we must live, and if I had my way, it would be honestly. Yet, as you know, there are some bad people in every community, and, of course, ours is no exception. And what wonder? We are without name or nation—wandering ever in hunger and cold—repulsed by those who have homes and competence. Do you marvel, then, that they are not all saints?"

Her voice grew tremulous and sad as she pictured the condition of her race.

"I do not wonder," he replied, "for they are tempted beyond others. But as you have found so comfortable a place, I presume you intend to remain here for some months. Permit me to say that I am disposed to aid your people in being honest, especially as I have pledged my word to assist in prosecuting all found violating the laws of the land. My land joins the estate of Mr. Melford, whom I know to be a humane and kind man. In his name as well as my own, I pledge you every assistance and protection, upon the condition that our property and rights, with those of the entire town and neighborhood, are respected."

"Our people are proud, sir; are not beggars, and will not take alms," replied the gipsy, with a haughty glance and gesture. But it almost instantly softened, and she went on, "Yet, if you can show me a way of getting an honest living here, I pledge you the compact shall be kept to the letter."

"The streams upon this estate and my own are full of fish—the woods abound in game. Both will find a ready market in town and at our houses. You are welcome to all you can

obtain. At least I can answer for myself, and I will see Mr. Melford at once about it."

"You are indeed kind. I thank you,"—and she extended her long, thin hand. "Old Zilla will at least see that none trespass upon you. Farewell."

As Clarence Hastings bowed over the hand given him he felt as if indeed in the presence of a person in authority. Paul led him once more through the encampment and out into the highway, bidding him good morning, and refusing the money offered to him.

Clarence Hastings was an exceedingly handsome young man of about three-and-twenty, rich and independent. He lived in a fine old country mansion about a mile from the town, just far enough for seclusion. The surroundings revealed culture and refinement.

A maiden sister, some years older than himself, took charge of his house. They lived alone in the family homestead, as they had done from childhood.

A week after his visit to the gipsy encampment, his sister Mary called to him from the window of the little breakfast-room, as he sat over his newspaper and coffee, "Clarence, here comes the queerest creature! I am positive it is the little gipsy, Paul, with whom you had so romantic an adventure. Surely he looks like some species of monkey."

"Not at all, sister. He has a beautiful face."

And he arose, opened the door, and admitted his little friend. The boy's dark eyes were red with weeping, and he looked pale and very sad, and when questioned as to the reason, replied, "Old Zilla wishes to see you, sir. She is dying."

And the head drooped upon his clasped hands, while his little form trembled with suppressed sobs.

"I will go to her immediately. Do not cry. It may not be so bad as you think."

"She does not wish you to come until sunset, and told me to say she wished to see you at that hour."

"Say to her, then, my boy, that I will certainly be there at the appointed time."

"Surely, Clarence," interrupted his sister, "you will not think of going alone at such a time. Think of the isolated place, the lonely road, and the strange people you visit."

The form of the boy dilated, and his eyes flashed fire as he turned to answer her.

"You think, like all the rest, that we are murderers and dogs, but know that not so much as a hair of this kind gentleman's head will be injured. A gipsy knows how to return a kindness and protect a friend."

And, refusing all offers of hospitality, he strode out of the house and away with the air of a prince.

"Well, well," said Mary Hastings, "if that isn't a specimen of humanity! The gipsy who came the other day with a string of fish for me to purchase was like a poor whipped cur compared to this boy. He hung his head and made known his wishes in a sort of broken English jargon—something like Italian."

"Yes, there is a mystery about the lad, and old Zilla, his grandmother. If I mistake not, they have known a different life in other days."

At the appointed time, Clarence Hastings was again in the gipsy encampment. Paul met him at the top of the crags, and led him as before through the now silent place. Not even the voice of a child or the barking of a dog broke the stillness. In the gleam of the early evening shadows, he distinguished the form of a number of men grouped about the dying embers of their camp-fires. Every one seemed to have sought their tents or waggons. As they drew near the tent of old Zilla, a strange haunting sound fell upon their ears. Paul lifted the curtain, and they passed within.

Reclining, as upon the day he had first visited her, Hastings saw old Zilla. Her face was ashy pale, and showing marks of great recent suffering. Her hands were folded upon her breast, holding a crucifix; her eyes were closed. A lamp, suspended from the centre pole of the tent, gave a dim light. Paul placed his fingers upon his lips in token of silence, and they stood and listened to the following strain:—

"The spirit of my native land,
It visits me once more—though I must die
Far from the myrtle which thy breeze has fanned,
My own bright Italy!"

"The nightingale is there,
The sunbeam's glow, the citron flower's perfume;
The south wind whispers in the scented air—
It will not pierce the tomb!"

A sob broke in upon the last strain. It came from the overcharged heart of the boy, Paul, and aroused the old woman to the consciousness of their presence.

"Ah, you have come!" she said, lifting her head feebly to get a better view of the dim surroundings. "I have much to say to you, sir, and my voice is thin and weak. Come nearer. And you, my child, go without and wait until I call you. I must see this kind friend of yours alone."

The boy instantly obeyed, and Hastings seated himself at her bidding upon a stool close to her side.

"My story is long," she continued; but I must make it brief, for my hours are numbered. I was born in the lowly condition you find me, but my beauty won for me the love of an Italian noble, who educated and made me his happy wife. To us was born one child, a daughter; and the beauty which had proved my

greatest blessing was her greatest curse. She married in early life. The boy, Paul, was the fruit of that union. But sickle and spoiled by indulgence, his mother soon got tired of her bonds, and fled with one of her many admirers, leaving husband and child. The latter I took charge of, while its father went in search of that which is very sweet to our race—revenge!"

The old woman paused from exhaustion and emotion, and feebly wiped the moisture from her brow. Then, gathering new strength, she went on:—"My husband had died before our daughter's disgrace; and, a widow, with the pride of a kingly race throbbing in my veins, I was left to bear my sorrow and shame alone. For two years my daughter enjoyed the pottage for which she had bartered her birthright. Then justice and revenge overtook her. She was found dead in bed, poisoned by an unseen hand; and the author of her fall was poniarded in the street by a masked figure, who hissed his crime into his ear even as his life-blood crimsoned the pavement. Having no male issue, I was driven by the next successor from the old chateau which sheltered my grey head and that of my grandchild. Bowed with grief, homeless and friendless, the old spirit of my people returned to me; and, taking Paul, I wandered forth in search of the tribe of my kindred. My aged father, the Gipsy King, still lived. He had governed his people for nearly half a century; there was no one to succeed him, and my return was hailed with joy. But poverty and want drove us at last to these golden shores."

"Now listen to the most important part of my revelation. The child of my daughter was, unfortunately for us all, a girl, whom we named Pauline, giving promise, like her mother, of rare beauty. I conceived the idea of disguising and passing her off as a boy, thus shielding her from the fiends that could beset her path as a woman; and so carefully have I guarded the secret that not even one of the tribe has ever discovered the deception. When I am gone, should I leave her with them it would certainly be found out, and she would pay the penalty of my lack of confidence. I have guarded and guided my people with an enlightened mind; but they will soon return to semi-barbarism, and the child is too tender a plant to be left in such soil. Receive her, then, as my dying legacy."

She drew from beneath her pillow a little ebony casket, and, touching a spring, displayed to the astonished gaze of Hastings a magnificent set of diamonds and pearls, with a necklace of the same costly gems.

"These," she resumed, "are her dowry. They were given to me by my noble husband upon my wedding day. Do you accept my gift?"

In a voice trembling with emotion, Hastings signified his assent. She placed a small whistle to her lips, blew a feeble note, and instantly the child stood before her, and the red and swollen eyes testified that she had been weeping. The old gipsy drew the delicate face down to her, and gazed at it as if she would carry the memory of it down to her grave.

"So like—so like my own. Pauline, my darling, I have given you to this gentleman, stranger though he is. I know his heart is kind, and I can trust him."

She placed the little hand of the child in that of Clarence Hastings, and murmured a blessing in her native tongue. Then glancing up with fast glazing eyes, she whispered, "May Heaven deal with you as you do with her! Quick!" she gasped, with a strange pallor creeping over her face. "Draw aside the curtain, child."

Pauline obeyed; the dying gipsy gazed out upon the dark hills where the autumn winds sighed mournfully through the frost-touched leaves, and the calm white stars looked solemn and near.

"I give you all my parting blessing," murmured the white lips, as one after another stole out from the shadows, and gathered near. "I have given my Paul to this gentleman. Dispute not my act, and choose you one more fitter to guide you."

Her speech ceased suddenly, a gurgling sound was heard, and then she was dead. A mournful sound went up from all in the little encampment, and mingled with the wailing winds as Hastings bore the unconscious child up the rocky path. The strange people were mourning their queen.

In the grey of early morning Hastings reached his home, and gave into the arms of his sister the gipsy's legacy, who, as the years passed, ripened into a beautiful woman. Her rich southern nature, full of fire and impetuous impulses, had been toned down by judicious training, and careful culture had tenfold increased her charms. And when at last she stood beside her friend and benefactor in shining garments, her dusky hair covered with orange blossoms and rich creamy lace that fell like a white benediction about her tall and queenly form, she bore indeed the air of majesty.

"You are then worthy of your lineage, my darling," said Clarence Hastings, gazing enraptured upon her; producing the little casket given him by old Zilla, he opened it; and, drawing forth the costly gems, he clasped them about her regal neck and beautiful arms.

"Clarence, oh, Clarence!" she exclaimed, "what extravagance! I ought not to accept them. You have already filled my life with love and happiness, and these gems, believe me, are worthless compared with your love. Take them back, I entreat you. They are too costly for so penniless a bride;" and her great luminous eyes grew misty with tears.

"They are your own, my love, only placed in my keeping for you. They are your dowry from

your grandmother. So, after all, you are far from being penniless. You know, however, my darling, that they enhance nothing of your priceless value to me," and he tenderly kissed away the two bright tears that rested for a moment upon her rosy-tinted cheeks. Then he led her down into the drawing-room, where a few guests were waiting, and the gipsy's legacy was sealed to him for life.

"TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US."

Bill Baker owned a fighting dog,
A brindle, coarse-haired brute,
Whose chief delight was to engage
In a canine dispute;
An ill-conducted, vicious, cross,
Stub-tailed, hair-lipped, crop-eared,
And red-eyed canine nuisance,
By the neighborhood canines feared.

Bill's dog came down the street on a
Diagonal dog trot,
A-looking for some other dog
For whom to make it hot;
When, on a scrubby-looking brute
His vision chanced to fall,
Staring from out a looking-glass
That leaned against the wall.

Bill's dog surveyed that strange canine
With sinister regard,
And doubted if he'd ever seen
A dog look quite so hard.
The more he gazed the less respect
He felt within him stir,
For that demoralized, cross-grained,
And hang-dog looking cur.

That strange dog returned Bill's dog's
Insulting stare, in kind,
Which tended to still more disturb
Bill's canine's peace of mind.
With every bristling hair along
His back he fiercely frowned,
And curled his tail until he raised
His hind feet from the ground.

And he showed his teeth and cocked his ears,
And otherwise behaved
Impertinently, as dogs do
Whose instincts are depraved;
But all his hostile signs were met
By signs, as hostile, quite,
And Bill's dog felt himself compelled
To slink away or fight.

He flew into that looking-glass
With all his might and main—
Filled with chagrin, and broken glass,
He soon flew out again.
Reflection showed Bill's dog that he
Had got into a scrimmage,
Through indignation at the sight
Of his own hideous image.

The knowledge of his aspect quite
Destroyed his self-esteem;
For the hideous reality
Surpassed his wildest dream.
Life lost, at once, all charm for him;
So, mournfully he steered
Into a neighboring sausage shop
And never re-appeared.

The moral of this doggerel
Is obvious, I trust;
(For there is a moral lesson in
Bill Baker's dog's distrust;)
If some men knew how they appear
To others, they would hide
Themselves within a sausage shop—
That is, they'd suicide.

ANNIE'S FIRST FLIRTATION

BY SWEET SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER I.

The twilight of a dull, cold November day had given place to the gloom of night, when I drew a comfortable rocking-chair before the cheerful wood-fire blazing on the sitting-room hearth, and gave myself up to a series of reflections. First, I wondered if my hair, which I had just finished putting up in curl-papers, would hang in graceful ringlets on the morrow, and call forth the exclamation which I had once before elicited, of "corkscrews."

We lived in a delightful little village which was only a few hours' ride from a flourishing little city, and, in the evening in question, I was sitting up, waiting for papa to return from E— on the evening train—dear papa, who had promised to bring home to his teasing daughter the "love of a bat" which had so won her admiration, as it hung temptingly displayed in the show window. That same little hat I had destined should be placed in the most jaunty manner possible on my flowing curls the next morning, as I sauntered into church, and I smiled as I saw in anticipation the looks of admiration which would be cast upon it by my lady friends, while I felt sure the face and curls beneath would fascinate the gentlemen's gaze.

So absorbed was I in my fancied triumph that I had forgotten the object for which I was waiting, when the opening and shutting of the hall door aroused me. I hastened to meet papa—and my new hat—but paused a moment in surprise, for a lady stood at his side. Only a moment did I hesitate; the next instant, the visitor and I went through a pantomime suggestive of the greatest delight, and at which the gentlemen's faces, had any been present, would have grown long with envy. I recognized Annie Bradfield, a friend of my school days,

who had been for two years promising to pay me a long visit. I had long since given up all hopes of its fulfilment, and yet nothing could have given me more pleasure than the surprise.

"Isn't this a delightful and unlooked-for pleasure to you?" she asked, with the old mischief shining in her eyes, as I assisted her in removing hat and cloak. "Upon honor, Sue, been wanting to come all this time, but couldn't. But I intend to stay until you get tired of me, then going to give you a resting time and come back again. But what great event is in prospect? From the present decoration of your head, I imagine you are setting a trap, intending to ensnare somebody in the meshes of brown curls. We can then test our superior charms; I will contend the field with you. I came to Clinton for the express purpose of captivating its famed lady-killing gentlemen."

"Having failed in your desired aim at home? I think Clinton will not be found wanting in good taste, either," was my sportive reply. Immediately upon his arrival papa had gone to mother's room, while, after relieving Annie of her traveling wraps, I led her upstairs in triumph. Thus, having secured the doors against intrusion, we settled ourselves for a long talk, each ensconced in the depths of a large easy-chair drawn near the blazing fire.

"When does Miss Bradfield intend to commence her vanquishing career, and whom has she designated as her first victim?" I repeated, after we were comfortably seated.

"Well, you see, Sue, every prophet is without honor in his own country, and so am I. Besides, it did not accord with my plan to thus display my full powers. *Mamère* and Buddie seem lamentably ignorant of the fact that I am almost eighteen, but still regard me as a wee bit of a girl. I feel my growing importance, and have at length won their reluctant consent to visit Clinton without them. My plan is this: to assume all the dignity of which I am mistress, confine these flowing locks under a huge chignon, and, under your protection, enter Clinton society as a young lady of twenty. What say you? Am I not clever in invention?"

For a moment I was silent.
"Alas for the rarity of charity!" cried Annie. "You only know that my superior charms will eclipse your own. Oh, it is pitiful to be so very attractive as I am. It is just envy in you to wish me to 'blush unseen, and waste my sweetness on the desert air.' But, Sue, I faithfully promise not to succeed you in the affections of—what's his name, by the way?"

"I haven't discovered myself, yet. But seriously, Annie, your mother and brothers do not intend that you shall live a recluse, while here, and not see visitors? Why, I fear you will have no enjoyment at all. Clinton is partial to strangers. I would never be forgiven if I allowed you to isolate yourself while here, for some of my friends are so anxious to see you! You see, young lady, your fame is not confined to territorial limits. You need not attempt to personate a young lady, and burlesque that character," I added with a mischievous glance, "but be simple, natural and silly. I am determined you shall enjoy yourself while here, and you most certainly will not, if you follow the programme you have laid out."

"Quite an acknowledgment. I presume you speak from experience. But I have never been thrown in gentlemen's society, nor do I care to be. Ever since I was a little girl, Willie has been telling me how fastidious men are. I am positively afraid of them all."

"Nonsense, Annie! It is foolish in your mother and brothers to endeavor to keep you a child so long. While you are here, I will take the liberty of varying things a little. It is time for you to enter society."

"Very well, Sue. *Mamma's* parting injunction was for me to be an obedient girl, though to whom I was to render obedience I never inquired. So I will install you as my guardian, and most conscientiously follow your dictates. You will surely regret presenting me to your gentlemen friends, however; they will be so terribly disappointed. But how long must it be ere I will see them? To-morrow, at church?"

"You will have the pleasure of seeing two at the breakfast table in the morning. I thought I told you in my last letter that we were now taking gentlemen boarders."

"You did, but I had forgotten the fact. What kind of specimens of humanity are they? Will I like them? Are they handsome or ugly? Married or single?"

"Well, which question must I answer first? Messrs. Crawford and Lester are both rising young lawyers; both handsome; both unmarried; and both very intelligent. Mr. Crawford is decidedly a ladies' man—loves every girl he sees. Mr. Lester seems from his actions to ignore the whole sex; never has anything to say to them, but devotes his whole time to his profession."

"Doesn't know how to render himself entertaining, I presume?"

"You are mistaken. He seldom thinks it necessary to exert himself. You never saw such a peculiar man in your life. He does not care for the good or bad opinion of any one in the world. When he is introduced to you to-morrow he will acknowledge the introduction, and perhaps never think of you again."

"I sincerely hope he will shun me as I intend to shun him. How perfectly horrible he must be! But the other one—what of him? There surely must be about him some attraction to compensate for the deficiency of the other?"

"Remember, Annie, I have not endorsed your opinion of Mr. Lester. I will wait until you see him, and find if you are correct. Mr. Crawford is the pet of the ladies of all Clinton,

He is a perfect gentleman (as is Mr. Lester), gay, witty, polished in manner, handsome in person, young, and, as I said before, a universal favorite among ladies. You asked me if I liked them. I do, very much indeed, and think you will too, after knowing them some time."

"No, I won't."

"Why?"

"Because."

"A logical reason, I must say. I fear I have given you a different idea of the gentlemen from what I intended, so we will say no more on the subject. Have my words prejudiced you? Why are you so thoughtful? A penny for what is now passing in your mind?"

"I hate lawyers!" she said, with an emphasis which left in my mind no doubt as to the truth of the exclamation. "Truth is as foreign to their profession as—as well, I don't know what—and they are just hateful, that's all!"

"No, these are not; see if you don't say so, too, after a while. But see—we have been so busily discussing these limbs of the law that we have failed to notice the lateness of the hour. I advise you, Annie, to go and dream awhile of the hard-hearted Lester."

"I don't care to be frightened in my sleep, and sincerely hope the fate of seeing him in dreams may be averted."

CHAPTER II.

"Well, the question which is now disturbing the serenity of my mind is, what am I to wear this morning? Sue, help me to decide, and remember how lasting first impressions sometimes are."

Annie turned to me for advice, throwing dress after dress upon the floor as she took them from her trunk. We finally made a selection, and I commenced the rather formidable task of taking my hair "down." Annie was in ecstasies over the "graceful ringlets," and laughingly asked me if I thought curls would be becoming to her style of beauty. We had just arranged the last ribbon, and given the finishing touches to our toilets, when the breakfast bell sounded below. I took my friend's hand, to lead her down, but for a moment she hesitated, while I felt her hand tremble.

"What a foolish girl I am! But really and truly, Sue, I dread to go to the table. I don't believe I can face the music."

I assured her she need not fear, as she would not be noticed. At last, after what I saw to really be an effort on her part, she summoned courage to accompany me down-stairs. The members of the family who had not seen her the previous evening gave her a most rapturous greeting, and the kissing process had just been finished, and Annie had taken the designated place at the table, when our boarders entered. Introductions followed, of course. Mr. Lester never appeared to notice Annie after his first bow, but commenced an animated discussion with papa upon some law case which was presented the previous day in court, and which excited considerable interest in our usually quiet little country seat. Mr. Crawford played the agreeable to Annie, and, although somewhat embarrassed, she endeavored to conceal the fact, and take her share in the conversation.

I could see that my young friend had favorably impressed both gentlemen, and was pleased with the knowledge. The first few days of her visit were pleasantly passed in making and receiving calls. Annie was much pleased with Clinton, and rendered herself as agreeable as possible to the many who sought her society. A warm friendship seemed established between her and Mr. Crawford, and it seemed she would never cease to sound his praises.

"Only see, Sue, this beautiful book Mr. Crawford has sent me," said Annie one day, holding up a handsomely bound volume of poems. "He wishes me to express my opinion of several authors which he has marked. Of course I know he only wishes to test my taste. Have you a *Kames' Criticism*? I think I could find the desired information there; if not, then you must read these poems and tell me your opinion, and of course it will be mine."

Of course I did my best to assist my little friend. In the evening, we all met again in the parlor. Mr. Crawford seemed enjoying an animated conversation on the subject of books in general, and the one he had lent Annie in particular. They were seated by a window near the piano, while, in a distant corner, Mr. Lester and I were coolly discussing them both. From one topic to another the conversation drifted. Mr. Lester talked more, and consequently was more entertaining than I had ever before seen him. I was deeply interested, and ceased to think of Annie or Mr. Crawford. I only noticed they spoke in whispers. The greater part of the talking seemed to rest upon him.

That night I noticed that an unusually thoughtful expression rested on my little friend's face, I did not question her, however, thinking that in time she would confide in me this trouble, as she did all others. I was not mistaken. She was standing before the bureau, brushing her hair in an idle, listless manner, when she turned away, and said, in a fretful tone, with that impulsiveness so natural with her—

"I do despise Taylor Crawford!"

"Why, Annie, what has he done to forfeit your good opinion?"

"Oh he's hateful, that's all! I did like him so much—he was so pleasant and agreeable! But now—"

"Well Annie?"

"I have discovered why he has been so."

"You speak in riddles. I cannot understand you."

"Well, Sue, Mr. Crawford has been saying sweet nothings to me ever since I have been

here. That was nothing, for I thought it was his way. But to-night he made love to me—I, who am only a stranger to him! I feel sure he is only a flirt, and is trifling with me, and I hate him for it."

"Well, Annie, pay him back in his own coin—make him feel your power."

"I cannot do it," she emphatically exclaimed. "I will not pretend what I do not feel. I do not care to stoop to deceit to humiliate him. If he is so anxious to carry on a flirtation, he must seek some other associate than Annie Bradfield."

"He has tried others; you are the next on the list. You might as well flirt with him, Annie, if you think your heart can remain uninterested."

"Heart remain uninterested, indeed! Do you think one tender emotion could be excited in my breast for the man whose ambition it is to make a fool of me? I am no match for this accomplished flirt. I could not make a flirtation interesting. He might know it."

"But he ought to be punished."

"Yes, Sue, you are right. I will let this scheming man see that two can play at his game. He thinks me more childish than I am. I will listen to all his soft speeches—in fact, let him make a fool of himself. A flirt. Ha! ha! What will mamma and Willie say?"

For several days I waited for Annie to tell me what progress she was making in her first flirtation, but her only answer to my questionings was,—

"He hasn't said much yet—takes it all out in looking. It frightens me sometimes to catch his glance, it is so full of pretended love. Well, I can see through him, thank goodness!"

My little friend had now been in Clinton almost three weeks, and had set the day of departure during the succeeding week, when she received a letter from her brother, requesting that she would join him a few days earlier in E—, when he would accompany her home. She heard of this change in her programme with undisguised sorrow, but came to the usual conclusion whenever "Buddie" was concerned, that "of course he knew best." A large party was to be given in town that night, which we determined to attend.

"My last in dear old Clinton," said Annie with a sigh.

"No, not the last," I cheerfully said. "You know you promised to come again in the summer, and then we will have all the fun over again. Will your young ladyship be then sufficiently recovered from her first flirtation to be ready for the second?"

"No, I hope this will be my last. I am tired of this deceit. I am fearful all the time of saying something which will jeopardize my cause. I like to believe every word any one tells me. I hate to have to sift so much falsehood to find a little truth, and then it is so difficult to draw a dividing line between deceit and truth. Mr. Crawford has been acting a part, and I have too. By the by, Sue, my sudden departure will bring our little affair to an untimely end. Do you suppose he will wait to bring it to a focus in the summer?"

"No, I have taken pains to inform him of your proposed departure. He seemed really sorry, but of course we know why. I know him too well to think he will not learn his fate to-night."

"Well, if he claims my answer, I don't care. I feel conscience clear about the way I have acted. It was no premeditated thing on my part—I was drawn into this flirtation."

But, in spite of her gay tone, I saw that Annie was ill at ease, and I smiled at the success which my little plot had met with. Knowing Annie's shy nature, I had felt convinced from the first that Mr. Crawford's love for her would never be returned unless pique led her to engage in a flirtation with him. I knew the gentleman was in earnest—her modesty would not permit her to do so. I saw that she was interested in him, despite herself, and felt pretty sure that Annie's home would yet be in Clinton.

The party was a brilliant affair, and Annie and I enjoyed it extremely. The clock on the mantel struck two as we went hurrying up-stairs to our room. There was an unusually bright color on Annie's cheeks, and a gratified gleam in her eye. She threw her arms around me.

"Well, dear?" I said.

"O Sue!" she softly exclaimed, "he really loves me after all."

"Nonsense, my dear!"

"No, truth! He loves me dearly, and wrote to Buddie about it a week ago, and that's why Buddie wants me to meet him in E—. And—I am so happy, Sue!"

I kissed her, and we remained quiet for a while.

"Sue, you plotter," she said, suddenly, "you have been deceiving me all this time—you knew all about it!"

"Well, my dear, you would never have found out that you loved Mr. Crawford if I had not plotted a little."

"I forgive you—but, after all, Mr. Crawford did make a goose of me—I never dreamed he really loved me."

"Just as if he could help it!" Another pause.

"Annie—"

"Well schemer?"

"Let's get married on the same day."

"Sue! You are not even engaged, are you?"

"Yes, Miss Consequence. I have promised to become Mrs. Lester."

There was a shriek of delight, a rapturous embrace; and then two of the happiest girls in Christendom went to bed and dreamed of the philosophy of flirtations.

DR. GOLDING.

In the year 1853, I was visiting a friend in the small town of Fairview, Virginia, when I was taken very ill with fever. A physician by the name of Dr. Golding attended me, and nursed me kindly through my protracted sickness; and by his gentlemanly deportment, and skill as a doctor, he quite won my heart.

He was a married man, and I supposed him to be about forty years of age. He was portly and handsome, and a favorite with all who knew him. I was often struck by his great love for his wife; she seemed the all-absorbing thought of his mind, and the topic on which he delighted to dwell.

I did not see Mrs. Golding during my stay at Fairview, though the doctor often told me that she would call on me as soon as I recovered my health. I remained at Fairview several weeks after I was quite well, but was disappointed that Mrs. Golding did not pay the promised visit.

Some years after, I again visited Fairview; my old friend, the doctor, was the first to welcome me. He frequently called as he passed in visiting his patients. One afternoon he called, and I remarked to Lizzie (my friend) that I had never seen the doctor in better spirits. He stopped only a few moments, as he said he was going to see a gentleman in the country, some miles from the town, and expected he should not be home before late at night. After he had gone, I remarked to Lizzie that I would not exchange the company of Dr. Golding for that of any young man I ever knew. She laughed, and said, "I'll tell Mrs. Golding of that, and make her jealous, though some persons do not think she loves her husband very much." I laughed, and then the subject changed.

The next morning Lizzie ran into my room before I was dressed, exclaiming in a horrified voice, "Oh, Maggie! Dr. Golding is dead."

I looked at her for a moment, scarcely comprehending her, and cried, "Impossible!" and then added, "Lizzie, it must be a mistake, for Dr. Golding was here yesterday in perfect health; how can it be?"

But she insisted that it was so, for her brother went to the post-office, and heard it there, and said all the town was in a commotion about it, and there could be no doubt of it.

When Mr. West (Lizzie's husband) came in to breakfast, he gave us all the particulars that he could gather. They were these. Dr. Golding had returned home quite late, perhaps about ten o'clock; several persons saw him as he passed through the town, on his way home. Mrs. Golding had told all else that was known. They lived alone, on the outskirts of the town, with only one servant. They had no children.

She had retired when he came home, and knew that he sat up writing for a short time after he came in, and supposed it was about eleven o'clock when he went to bed. She said that he complained of feeling very tired, and not very well, but took no medicine (as is generally the case with doctors); and as she was sleepy, she thought nothing much of it, and they both soon fell asleep. After sleeping some hours, she was awakened by hearing him groan. She asked him if he felt worse, but received no answer, though she thought she heard him vainly trying to articulate. She rose and lit a lamp, and on approaching the bed, saw him gasping for breath. She tried to lift him up, but in a moment he expired. She then ran, terrified, to summon the servant girls, but he was past all earthly aid.

The servant corroborated Mrs. Golding's statement so far as she knew. Doctors examined him, but found no traces of poison or foul play, and the coroner's jury returned a verdict of "Died by some unknown disease."

No one knew of his having any disease, but it was ascertained on inquiry that his father had died of disease of the heart, and it was thought likely it was the case with him. This was all. He was buried with Masonic honors. But people did not seem satisfied, and whenever it was spoken of, they called it a great mystery.

In the same town lived Mr. King, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Golding's. Mrs. King, Mrs. Golding's sister, had died a year or two previous to the death of Dr. Golding; but Mr. King had never married again, nor, indeed, had he ever paid the slightest attention to any lady since. Mr. King was a wealthy lawyer, and his home was one of luxury. Dr. Golding was in only moderate circumstances, and their home was plain but neat. Mrs. King had always been a delicate lady, and when their little Lena was a year old she died, leaving her infant in the care of Mrs. Golding, her only sister. Mrs. Golding took the little girl to her own home, and lavished on her all the affection of a mother, for she had been denied the blessing of children, and she took the child to her heart at once. Dr. Golding's love for the child was scarcely less than that of his wife.

Mr. King lived alone in his own home, attended only by his servant. He was very often away; but when at Fairview, he devoted a great part of his time to his little daughter, who was a winsome little fairy.

But having thus gone back to explain family affairs, I will now proceed with this singular story.

I attended the funeral of Dr. Golding, and there, for the first time, saw Mrs. Golding. She seemed perfectly overcome and stupefied by her great trouble—moaning softly to herself, and when she raised her eyes, they had a bewildered, frightened look, as though she could scarcely comprehend her sudden bereavement.

Soon after all this happened, I returned home,

and had almost ceased to think of it, when some eight months later or more Lizzie wrote me that "Mrs. Golding and Mr. King were married!"

This news astonished me, and shocked me scarcely less than that of Dr. Golding's death. Lizzie wrote me that no one suspected it until they were "actually married;" for all had been conducted so quietly. True, busybodies and gossips had predicted that they would make a match, as they thought it would suit both parties; but all were taken by surprise when it took place before even a year had elapsed, and while Mrs. Golding wore the deepest mourning. Lizzie added, "Madam Rumour says that little Lena was the cause of the early marriage; for after the death of Dr. Golding, Mrs. Golding remained for some months in her own house, secluded from the world, with no companions save Lena, and a nurse and cook. But seven months after his death, she was obliged to break up and go to live with a brother residing in a distant State. Accordingly, she commenced preparations, but then came the difficulty. What was to be done with Lena? Mrs. Golding said she could never give her up, for she was all she had to love, and that her sister on her death-bed consigned her to her care; also, that Lena was so attached to her that she refused to leave her. Mr. King said that he could not part with his only child, and that she must remain with him. And thus they compromised matters, so that both could retain their darling, by getting married."

And now Mrs. Golding moved from her modest cottage, to become the mistress of the handsomest establishment in Fairview; and when she changed her home, she seemed also to change herself. When the widow's robes were laid aside, so also was the plain little lady, and she came forth the gayest of the gay, and one of the leaders of fashionable life. Seeing her now, no one would have recognised her as the plain Mrs. Golding of the cottage.

I met Mrs. King in my subsequent visits to Fairview, very frequently, but did not fancy her much. She seemed too gay for one of her years, and who had been a widow. I remarked at times a kind of frightened, terrified look, where there was no seeming cause; and if any one remarked it, she would say it was nervousness, that she had been so all her life, and hoped we would think nothing of it. Mr. King was always kind to his wife, but never loving, for his heart seemed bound up in Lena.

A few years of gaiety, and Mrs. King became transformed, from a lady of fashion, to a perfect recluse, and it was rumored that she was deranged. She shut herself up at home, and refused to go out, or to see company. At first, her most intimate friends were received, and they said that she was undoubtedly insane; but they were soon forbidden to see her. For three or four months she remained thus; and then one morning her door was found locked, and no one could gain admittance. After a few hours Mr. King had the door forced, and then Mrs. King was found on the bed, dead! By her side was a bottle of laudanum, and a written confession, saying that she had smothered Dr. Golding, by dipping a thickly-folded cloth in water, and laying it on his face while he slept, and then placing a pillow over that, and holding it down until he was dead. What she had told when questioned she had invented. All this was done in order that she might marry Mr. King, and live in luxury and splendor. She laid well her plans, and carried them all out, but her elegance satisfied her not. She plunged into a vortex of gaiety to stifle conscience, and tried in vain to be happy.

The demon of remorse seized her, and she imagined that her guilt was written on her face to be read by all, and that ere long she would be dragged from her home to suffer for her crime. So she determined to end her miserable life; but she could not even do that in peace, until she wrote a confession of her guilt. Soon afterwards she was buried. Mr. King took Lena to Europe; and they have never since returned to America.

Thus was cleared up the mystery of Dr. Golding's death.

KISS ME.

A very funny incident occurred a few days since at a certain store in the city. It is too good to be lost: One of our composers has written a pretty song entitled "Kiss Me." A very pretty, blushing maid, having heard of the song, and thinking she would get it, stepped into the music store to make a purchase. One of the clerks, a modest young man, stepped up to wait on her. The young lady threw back her veil, saying:

"I want 'Rock Me to Sleep!'"

The clerk got her the song and put it before her.

"Now," said the young lady, "I want the 'Wandering Refugee!'"

"Yes, ma'am," said the clerk, bowing, and in a few minutes he produced the Refugee.

"Now," said the young lady, "I want the song meaning the song above-mentioned."

The poor clerk's eyes popped fire almost, as he looked at the young lady in utter astonishment, for he was not aware of the fact that a song by that name had been published.

"Wh—what did you say, Miss?"

"Kiss Me," said she.

"I can't do it; I never kissed a young lady in my life," said the clerk.

And about that time a veil dropped, a young lady left in a hurry, the clerk felt sick, and the dealer lost the sale of some music.

A WORD TO FATHERS.

We have read a story of a little boy, who, when he wanted a new suit of clothes begged his mother to ask his father if he might have it. The mother suggested that the boy might ask for himself. "I would," said the boy, "but I don't feel well enough acquainted with him." There is a sharp reproof to the father in the reply of his son. Many a father keeps his children so at a distance from him that they never feel confidently acquainted with him. They feel that he is a sort of monarch in the family. They feel no familiarity with him. They fear and respect him, and even love him some, for children cannot help loving somebody about them; but they seldom get near enough to him to feel intimate with him. They seldom go to him with their wants and trials. They approach him through the mother. They tell her everything. They have a highway to her heart on which they go in and out with perfect freedom. In this keeping-off plan fathers are to blame. Children should not be held off. Let them come near. Let them be as intimate with the father as with mother. Let their little hearts be freely opened. It is wicked to freeze up the love fountains of little ones' hearts. Fathers do them an injury by living with them as strangers. This drives many a child away from home for the sympathy his heart craves, and often improper society. It nurses discontent and mistrust, which many a child does not outgrow in his lifetime. Open your hearts and your arms, Oh fathers! be free with your children; ask for their wants and trials; play with them; be fathers to them truly, and they will not need a mediator between themselves and you.

EXPANDING THE CHEST.

Take a strong rope, and fasten it to a beam overhead; to the lower end of the rope attach a stick three feet long, convenient to grasp with the hands. The rope should be fastened to the centre of the stick, which should hang six or eight inches above the head. Let a person grasp this stick with the hands two or three feet apart, and swing very moderately at first—perhaps only bear the weight, if very weak—and gradually increase, as the muscles gain strength from the exercise, until it may be used from three to five times daily. The connection of the arms with the body, with the exception of the clavicle with the breast-bone, being a muscular attachment to the ribs, the effect of this exercise is to elevate the ribs and enlarge the chest; and as Nature allows no vacuum, the lungs expand to fill the cavity, increasing the volume of air the natural purifier of the blood, and preventing the congestion or the deposit of tuberculous matter. We have prescribed the above for all cases of hemorrhage of the lungs and threatened consumption of thirty-five years, and have been able to increase the measure of the chest from two to four inches within a few months, and with good results. But especially as a preventive we would recommend this exercise. Let those who love to live cultivate a well-formed, capacious chest. The student, the merchant, the sedentary, the young of both sexes—ay, all—should have a swing on which to stretch themselves daily. We are certain that if this were to be practised by the rising generation in a dress allowing a free and full development of the body, many would be saved from consumption. Independently of its beneficial results, the exercise is an exceedingly pleasant one, and as the apparatus costs very little, there need be no difficulty about any one enjoying it who wishes to.—*Dio Lewis.*

CHARGE IT.

A simple little sentence is this, to be sure, and yet it may be considered one of the most insidious enemies with which people have to deal. It is very pleasant to have all the little commodities offered for sale in the market, and it is hard sometimes to deny one's self of the same when they can be obtained by just ordering them and saying "charge it." But the habit of getting articles, however small the expense may be, without paying for them, keeps one's funds in a low state most of the time. "I have not the money to-day," but I should like the article very much," says a young man who, happening to come into a store, sees something which strikes his fancy. "Never mind," says the gentlemanly clerk, "you are good for it." "Well, I'll take it, and you may charge it." And so it is that little accounts are opened at one place and another, till the young man is surprised at his liabilities, which, though small in detail, are sufficiently large in the aggregate to reduce his cash materially when settling day comes. In many instances if the cash was required the purchase would not be made, even had the person money by him; but to some, getting an article charged does not seem like parting with an equivalent. Still, when pay day comes, as it does, his illusion vanishes, and the feeling is experienced of parting with money and receiving nothing in return.

It was once said of a miserly money lender that he kept the trunk containing his securities near the head of his bed, and lay awake to hear them accumulate interest.

POWER OF THE IMAGINATION.

A man of science in Paris once prevailed on the Minister of Justice to experiment upon a murderer who had been condemned to death. The criminal was of high rank, and he was informed that, in order to save the feelings of his family, he would not be put to death upon the scaffold, but bled to death within the precincts of the prison; also that his decease would be free from pain. His eyes were bandaged, he was strapped to a table, and at a preconcerted signal, four of his veins were gently pricked with a pin. At each corner of the table was a small fountain of water, so contrived as to flow gently into basins placed to receive it. He, believing that it was his blood he heard flowing, gradually became weak, and the conversation of the doctors in an undertone confirmed him in this opinion. "What fine blood!" said one. "What a pity this man should be condemned to die, he would have lived a long time." "Hush!" said the other; then approaching the first he asked him in a low voice, "How many pounds of blood are there in the human body?" "Twenty-four; you see already about ten pounds extracted; that man is now in a hopeless state." The physicians then receded by degrees and continued to lower their voices. The stillness which reigned in the apartment, broken only by the dripping fountains, the sound of which was gradually lessened, so affected the brain of the poor patient that, although a man of very strong constitution, he fainted and died without having lost a drop of blood.

STORY OF A PICTURE.

A painter once wanted a picture of innocence, and drew the likeness of a child at prayer. The little suppliant was kneeling beside his mother; the palms of his uplifted hands were reverently pressed together; his rosy cheek spoke of health, and his mild blue eye was upturned with the expression of devotion and peace. The portrait of young Rupert was much prized by the painter, who hung it upon his study wall, and called it "Innocence." Years passed away, and the artist became an old man. Still the picture hung there. He had often thought of painting a counterpart—the picture of "Guilt"—but had not found the opportunity. At last he effected his purpose by paying a visit to a neighboring jail. On the damp floor of his cell lay a wretched culprit named Randall, heavily ironed. Wasted was his body and hollow his eye; vice was visible in his face. The painter succeeded admirably, and the portrait of young Rupert and Randall were hung side by side, for "Innocence" and "Guilt." But who was young Rupert and who was Randall? Alas! the two were one. Old Randall was young Rupert led astray by bad companions, and ending his life in the damp and shameful dungeon.

LIGHTNING-RODS.

Lightning-rods should consist of round iron of about one inch diameter, and its parts, throughout the whole length, should be in perfect metallic continuity by being secured together by coupling ferrules. To secure it from rust, the rod should be coated with black paint, itself a good conductor; it should terminate in a single platinum point. The shorter and more direct the course of the rod to the earth the better. Bendings should be rounded and not formed in acute angles. It should be fastened to the building by iron eyes, and may be insulated from these by cylinders of glass, the latter point however, not being of special importance. The rod should be placed, in preference, on the west side of the building, and it should be connected with the earth in a manner so that at least one or two feet of the rod are imbedded.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

AN Italian botanist writes home from Papua, or New Guinea, that he has collected about five hundred species of flowering plants on the island, but expresses his disappointment at finding the New Guinea flora not more than half as rich as that of Borneo. This fact goes to confirm the theory advanced by Alfred Russell Wallace, the English naturalist, that these two islands once formed portions of two distinct continents—New Guinea, of the Australian continent, and Borneo, of Asia.

METEORS rarely approach men so nearly as to make their heat felt; but the Hon. Rawson Rawson, Governor of Barbadoes, has sent to England an account of a meteor seen at St. Thomas last autumn, which awakened a sleeping man by the intensity of its heat and light, as it passed close to him where he lay resting on a platform near the shore. He subsequently discovered some ashes on the floating dock of which he was watchman, and near which he slept, but being ignorant of their possible value he neglected to preserve them.

THE BLUE COLOR OF THE SKY.—A curious case is assigned by M. Collas for the blue color of the sky. In opposition to M. Lallemand, who attributes the color to a fluorescent phenomenon—a reduction of refrangibility in the actinic

rays beyond the violet end of the spectrum—M. Collas maintains that the color is due to the presence of hydrated silica in a very finely divided state carried into the atmosphere with the aqueous vapor. The blue color of the Lake of Geneva is referred to a similar cause.

A PETRIFIED FOREST.—A very interesting account is contained in *Nature* of a petrified forest recently discovered in the Libyan Desert. Mr. Dixon and Dr. Grant of Cairo determined to visit a large mound commonly considered to be the ruins of a pyramid, and known as Leiden's Pyramid; on their arrival they found that it was only a hill, but that round the base, and stretching for some distance over the country, were masses of petrified wood. The trees were all exogenous, or having successive additions of growth to the outside of the wood; beds of flint nodules and oyster shells were also abundant.

EAST INDIAN METHOD OF CLEANING SILVER.—East Indian jewellers never touch silverware with any abrasive substance. For all articles of the kind, even the most delicate, the method of cleaning they adopt is as follows: Cut some juicy lemons in slices; with these rub any large silver or plated article briskly, and leave it hidden by the slices in a pan for a few hours. For delicate jewelry, the Indians cut a large lime nearly in half, and insert the ornament; they then close up the halves tightly, and put it away for a few hours. The articles are then to be removed, rinsed in two or three waters, and consigned to a saucepan of nearly boiling soap-suds, well stirred about, taken out, again brushed, rinsed, and finally dried on a metal plate over hot water, finishing the process by a little rub of wash-leather (if smooth work). For very old, neglected or corroded silver, dip the article, with a slow, stirring motion, in a rather weak solution of cyanide potash; but this process requires care and practice, as it is by dissolving off the dirty silver you obtain the effect. Green tamarind pods (oxalate of potash) are greater detergents of gold and silver articles than lemons, and are much more employed by the artisan for removal of oxides and firemarks.

HINTS TO FARMERS.

CUCUMBERS.—Plant seeds in frames and in the open ground, using plenty of seed to allow the bugs a share.

GET a thoroughbred boar of some of the improved breeds. This, with good care and feed, will soon give you a superior stock of swine. The small cost is nothing compared with the benefit.

POTATOES as a rule are not planted early enough. Plant early and deep, and use the harrow freely to kill small weeds before the potatoes come up, or just at the time they are coming through the soil.

SUCKING pigs when from three to four weeks old should be fed separately from the sow. Fresh skimmed milk is excellent. Give also some oats, either whole or ground, or corn-meal, or soaked corn, or, in short, anything they will eat.

MATERIALS FOR MORTAR.—The proper proportion for mortar for plastering is one cubic yard or 18 heaped bushels of stoneline, double that quantity of sand, and three bushels of hair. This quantity will cover 70 (2 inch) yards on lath.

CRIBBING is a vice, and not an unsoundness. The coat of a cribbing mare may not necessarily be a cribber. The vice often springs from indigestion, and this being often a hereditary complaint, such a colt should be carefully guarded against acquiring the vice.

MULCH.—A good mulch around newly-planted trees will be serviceable in keeping the roots from drying out. Salt-hay or anything which will prevent the sun from striking the soil around the trees, will answer, even if it be only a small heap of stones.

BEANS.—Put in the early sorts of snaps when night frosts are over, and by the middle of the month it is usually safe to plant the pole varieties. The poles should be set first, and the beans then planted around them. The rows should be four feet apart, and the hills the same distance.

STRAWBERRIES.—Plants mulched in the fall should be looked to to see that their crowns are properly uncovered, and those which were not covered will need a mulch of cut straw or leaves to prevent the rains from washing the soil upon the fruit, thus making the berries for the most part unsalable.

ARTESIAN WELLS.—There is no certainty of procuring water by an Artesian well without an experiment. The fact of a boring being made below the level of the bottom of a river or lake is no surety that water will be procured, because there must be a bed of porous rock or gravel existing through which the water percolates; this can only be ascertained by trial or geological knowledge.

GRASS and clover may be seeded in the spring, if sown early, without any protecting crop. The ground should be well prepared, made very fine, and the seed either brushed in with a bush-harrow or covered by rolling. A dressing of stimulating fertilizer, as guano or wood-ashes, would be useful. As it is now too late for such a seeding, a crop of late oats cut for fodder might be sown with the grass seeds.

PLANTING corn is the great work of this month. We have written so much on the subject that it is unnecessary to give further directions here.

Aim to put the land in good condition, and plant early. If you must plant late, select the small, early varieties of corn. Whatever you do or fail to do, do not neglect to keep your corn free from weeds. Clean, mellow land is the great secret of success in growing corn.

GOLDEN GRAINS.

WINE has drowned more than the sea.

THE experience of a man ceases only with his life.

WE can do more good by being good than in any other way.

TALENT, like beauty, to be admired, must be unostentatious.

HE is the happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.

THOSE who live on the failings of their neighbors will never die of starvation.

ENVY is an insult to a man's good sense, for it is the pain we feel at the excellences of others.

IF the best man's faults were written on his forehead, he would draw his hat over his eyes.

THE best society and conversation is that in which the heart has a greater share than the head.

PEOPLE would soon be astonished at results if they would all work together for the common good.

NO one need stand in fear of brave men but the wrong-doer; it is only cowards who stab in the back.

GIFTS from the hand are silver and gold; but the heart gives that which neither silver nor gold can buy.

HYPOCRISY is folly. It is much easier, safer, and pleasanter to be the thing which a man aims to appear, than to keep up the appearance of being what he is not.

WHAT duration do you expect for the immortal fame you would win—one, two, three, or four thousand years? How many fames have survived the latter date?

WHEN a woman possesses talent, it should be recognized and employed. More exact than most men in the details of things, she does better than they do what she knows as well.

LOVE is woman's teacher, developer, guardian. It sheds light upon her past, as well as her future.

To love one that is great is almost to be great one's self.

WHATEVER may be the means, or whatever the more immediate end of any kind of art, all of it that is good agrees in this, that it is the expression of one soul talking to another, and is precious according to the greatness of the soul that utters it.

BY him who can look with firmness on difficulties the conquest is already half achieved; but the man on whose heart and spirits they lie heavily will scarcely be able to bear up against their pressure. The forecast of timid, or the disgust of too delicate minds is a very unfortunate attendant for men of business, who, to be successful, must often push improbabilities and bear with mortifications.

A good character is to a young man what a firm foundation is to the artist who proposes to erect a building on it; he can build with safety, and as all who behold it will have confidence in its solidity a helping hand will never be wanted. But let a single part of this be defective, and you go on hazard, amid doubting and distrust, and ten to one it will tumble down at last, and mingle all that was built on it in ruins.

JOSH BILLINGS says: When we cum to think that there ain't on the face of the earth even one bat to much, and that there hasn't been since the daze of Adam a single surplus musketeer's egg laid by aksident, we can form some kind of an idee how little we know, and what a poor job we would make of running the masheenery of kreashtun. Man is a phool eny how, and the best of the joke is, he don't seem to know it. Bats have a destiny to fill, and I will bet four dollars they fill it better than we do ours.

FAMILY MATTERS.

TO MIX MUSTARD.—Two ounces of mustard, boiling water, half a teaspoonful of sugar. Mix the mustard and sugar with boiling water till it is thick and smooth. Add the water slowly to the powder. The sugar may be omitted, but we prefer it, as it softens the mustard.

GREENS.—In spring everybody seems seized with an appetite for "greens." The various plant sold under that title in the city markets are gladly welcomed, and the country folks send the children out to dig dandelions. It is quite safe to presume that the producer and the merchant will detect any very injurious weed, and that the cook will only need to examine with care to prevent unpleasant discoveries at the table, but among wild greens noxious plants are not unfrequently gathered, and severe and sometimes fatal illness occasioned by their use.

VEAL CURRY.—Cut a Spanish onion, or two small ones, into very small pieces, and a large sour apple into thin slices; put them into a stewpan, with a piece of butter the size of a

large walnut, and stir it about until lightly browned. Then mix in two dessertspoonfuls of curry powder, one teaspoonful of flour, and a pint of water; add one pound and three-quarters of lean veal cut into very small square pieces, seasoned with salt, and stir it round several times, that it may be well covered with the curry mixture. Put it over the fire to stew slowly for an hour and a half, or until the veal is tender. Squeeze in the juice of half a lemon strained, stir it round, and serve with rice in a separate dish.

MARKING ink may be made by dissolving separately an ounce of nitrate of silver, an ounce and a half of carbonate of soda in distilled or rain water. Mix the solutions, and collect and wash the precipitates in a filter whilst still moist; rub it up in a marble or wedgewood mortar with three drachms of tartaric acid; add two ounces of distilled water, mix six drachms of white sugar and ten drachms of powdered gum arabic, half an ounce of archil and water to make up six ounces in measure. Apply with a clean quill pen. Marking ink may be removed from linen by a saturated solution of cyanuret of potassium, applied with a camel's hair brush. After the marking ink has disappeared, the part should be well washed in cold water.

A PERFECT WATER-PROOF.—A writer in an English paper says:

By the way, speaking of water-proofs, I think I can give travellers a valuable hint or two. For many years I have worn India rubber water-proofs, but will buy no more, for I have learned that good Scottish tweed can be made entirely impervious to rain, and, moreover, I have learned how to make it so; and for the benefit of readers I will give the recipe. In a bucket of soft water put half a pound of sugar of lead, and half a pound of powdered alum: stir this at intervals, until it becomes clear, then pour it off into another bucket, and put the garment therein, and let it be in for twenty-four hours, and then hang it up to dry without wringing it. Two of my party—a lady and gentleman—have worn garments thus treated in the wildest storms of wind and rain without getting wet. The rain hangs upon the cloth in globules. In short, they were really water-proof. The gentleman, a fortnight ago, walked nine miles in a storm of rain and wind such as you rarely see in the South; and when he slipped off his overcoat his underclothes were as dry as when he put them on. This is, I think, a secret worth knowing, for cloth, if it can be made to keep out wet, is in every way better than what we know as water-proof.

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

If three miles make a league, how many make a conference?

THE fashion of wearing the front hair low on the forehead, now in favor with many of the fair sex, is known as the Skye terrier style.

A POCKET boot-jack has been invented in New York. You put your foot into your pocket, give a spring into the air, and off comes your boot.

WHEN Brigham Young's children sing, "Father, dear father, come home," the effect is said to be wonderful. The old man comes home without delay.

A SHERIFF in Florida, who was called upon to resign, wrote back:—"Your communication is received, stating that my resignation will meet the approval of the Governor. It does not meet mine."

A UTICA paper says, "A cow on Corn Hill kicked the pump over yesterday, and broke her leg. The cow must die, but the milkman hopes to be able to continue in business. He thinks he can repair the pump."

A FORGETFUL young woman out West, the other night, aroused the inmates of a hotel to which her bridal trip had led, on account of finding a man in her room. The trifling circumstance of her marriage that morning had quite escaped her memory, and it was not until summary justice was about to be visited on the offender, that she happened to recollect it.

A BRAVE little boy in Ohio found a broken rail on the railway line, and perceiving the peril in which the train would be placed if it should come dashing past without warning, sat out on the fence for five long hours in the bitter winter cold, in order that he might carry the first news of the accident to his father, who is local editor of a paper published in the neighboring village.

A NEW York gentleman, who has lately been badly bled in Wall street, tells this old joke as upon himself:—"When I first came down in Wall street I was called Stockwell; then, when I began to make money, I was called Mr. Stockwell. Then it was Captain Stockwell; subsequently I become known as Commodore Stockwell. Now it is that red-headed cuss from Cleveland."

A ROBIN red-breast sat upon a pole in Detroit one day last week, and a boy named Clynamer brought out his father's revolver, leveled it at the bird, and pulled the trigger. The ball missed the robin by about ten feet, went through the window of a house and brought up in a pile of crockery. Some excitement was occasioned, and the boy was taken home and made to chase the boot-jack around his mother.

A LITTLE boot black picked up a five cent piece on the sidewalk the other day, and was crowing over his prize when a burly carman demanded it, saying that he had just dropped it.

"Your five cent piece had no hole in it," said the boy, defiantly. "Yes it had," said the rogue of a claimant. "Well, this one ain't!" said the boy, as he walked off in triumph, leaving the opponent to be jeered at by the crowd.

THE SNORE.

O, the snore, the beautiful snore,
Filling her chamber from ceiling to floor!
Over the coverlet, under the sheet,
From her dimpled chin to her pretty feet!
Now rising aloft like a bee in June;
Now sunk to the wail of a cracked bassoon!
Now, flute-like, subsiding, then rising again,
Is the beautiful snore of Elizabeth Jane.

A CRUEL barrier-pigeon "amateur" condemned one of his pets to convey to his country seat the following laconic passage: "Send a basket of early green peas by express train; pack the bearer of this in with them, as he is a plump bird, and I intend to eat him with them!"

NEVER turn around with a ladder on your shoulder.—Old Mr. Watson on Nelson street, has got a nice little bill to pay. He sent a man down town for a pot of paint and a ladder. The man got the paint and went to a lumber yard after a ladder. Then he tied the paint pot on the end of the ladder, and put the ladder on his shoulder. This was a very smart arrangement, and the man himself admired it very much. He stated for home this way, and didn't find much trouble in getting along the first block, because people had an impression that a long ladder with a pot of yellow paint dangling on the end of it wasn't exactly the thing to trifle with, so they balanced along on the curbstone, or rubbed up against the buildings. Pretty soon the man saw somebody in a store he knew, and he turned around to speak to him, and he drove one end of the ladder into a millinery case, and knocked the crown out of an \$18 bonnet. Then he backed off in affright and knocked down two sewing machine agents with the other end. Then he started to turn around, and an old gentleman who was desperately endeavoring to pull his wife out of danger, saw the peril, and shouted—Hi, there! But it was too late. The pot struck against an awning post and the entire contents went over the aged couple. This so startled the man that he completely whirled around, smashing an entire store front, frightening a milkman's team, and knocking over some thirteen persons who were actively dodging about to get out of the way. Then he dropped the ladder, and fled into the country shouting murder and fire at every jump. A regular ordained painter is now engaged at Mr. Watson's house. —*Danbury News.*

OUR PUZZLER.

80. CHARADE.

Wild was the night, and the billows were dashing—
To pieces my first, as it drifted to shore;
The crew to the timbers themselves were seen lashing,
All thinking of homes they would never see more.
But one on the sea-shore was silently praying—
Though my first was my next—that no lives might be lost;
The cold moon between flying clouds was betraying
How vain her request, as she found to her cost.

Death-like she stood in the dawn of the morning—
Death-like the form at her feet she bewailed,—
Heedless of friendship, all sympathy scorning,
That bark was my whole, which her lover had sailed.

B. A. I.

81. PUZZLES.

1.
With piece of paper, or a slate
(Sit round the fire both large and small),
A letter make, almost an eight,
And now you have what covers all.

2.
If six and half of nine
Correctly you combine,
You quickly see
A useful tree,
Whose branches intertwine.

B. A. I.

82. CROSS PUZZLE.

A female name; a piece; an animal; habit; flying from the centre; a river; glimmering; part of a fish; an animal; plural of the reverse of down; kindred. The centrals, read down and across, name a large river.

W. G.

ANSWERS.

66. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Palestine—Sepulchre—thus:—1, Patroclus; 2, Anemone; 3, Lamp; 4, EsaU; 5, Samuel; 6, TumC; 7, Ipswich; 8, Nestor; 9, Exile.

67. CONUNDRUM.—Can I stir? (canister).

68. CHARADE.—Peabody.

69. BIBLICAL QUESTIONS.—1. Nehemiah, c. xlii, v. 16. 2. II Kings, c. xvi, v. 10. 3. II Chronicles, c. xxvi, v. 14 and 15. 4. II Samuel, c. iii, v. 27.

EVENING.

BY T. C. IRWIN.

Sunset: and not a sound;
Glories over sea and ground
Spaciously pouring.
On the deep one sailed bark
Crossing ruddy Vesper's spark,
And in ether the last lark
Tremulously soaring:—
Hark!

Faint and far from yon grey pile,
Turreted in Evening's smile,
Through the stillness growing dim,
Flows and ebbs along the rim
Of day, an anthem unto Him
With the earth's adoring:
Like a wave whose light is gone
After the great sun.

MY MISTAKE.

"And this is your final answer, Ethel?"
"Yes, Mr. Fairfax."

"Then good-bye, and may God bless you!"
And I was alone! And the sunshine seemed
to fade out of the sky as I listened to the sound
of his footsteps, growing fainter and fainter
down the long gravelled walk; for I loved Reginald Fairfax, reader, although I had just refused to become his wife.

My name was Ethel Douglass, and I was nothing but a poor village school-teacher—little, and dark, and plain—while he was rich and handsome, and belonged to one of the most aristocratic families in Brighton. It matters not how we became acquainted, but from the first moment he saw me he was attracted toward me, and sought my society continually.

This disturbed me; for though poor, I was proud, and I thought he meant to trifle with me—to make a pleasant pastime in sounding the depths of my young heart, and then leave me. My blood was fiery, and I repulsed him with scorn, but still he persevered, and made me love him in spite of myself. But I would not let him read my heart; for though I soon began to know that he was in earnest, and that he loved me honestly and well, yet I could never be his wife.

His family would call me plebeian, and look with scorn upon the bride he had chosen; and even he in time, if I became his wife, might regret his marriage, and this thought I could not brook. I had been educated to think thus, for my mother had married one far above her own station, and had lived a sad and miserable life until my father died, and she had come away from among his haughty relatives, and settled in the little brown house where we now live.

We were poor, for my father, early in life, had spent all his property in wild speculations, and had died, leaving his wife and two helpless little girls with only a pittance on which to live. My mother was a brave woman, however, and coming back to her native village, she spent her little all for the cottage where our home still was, and then gave music and painting-lessons (for she was accomplished) for our support.

With money thus earned, together with her own instructions, she had been able to give my sister and myself a thorough and finished education, until now my salary from my school, and my sister's as a music-teacher, supplied all our simple wants, and we lived happily and contentedly in our cozy home, caring little for worldly wealth and splendor.

Into this quiet retreat Reginald Fairfax had entered, with his noble face and gallant bearing, and stolen away my peace and happiness; but not even my mother's searching gaze read the truth. I hid my feelings bravely, and went on as blithely as ever, with my little round of daily duties, hiding an aching heart all the while, but never repenting of my act.

Two months slipped away, and one day a letter came. It was from my lover and I wept while I read:—

"DEAR ETHEL,—My heart hungers for you, and will not be satisfied. Let me come to you and teach you the lesson of love—for such love as mine must, in time, win yours in return. Send me one little line and bid me to your side.

"Yours, through life,
"REGINALD C. FAIRFAX."

My heart pleaded for him, but still I remained obdurate. A vision of his haughty mother and scornful sisters steeled me against him, and I murmured to myself—

"He would repent after a time ever making me his wife, and we would both be miserable for life. Better, far better for it to be as it is."

A few days after receiving the letter I picked up the morning paper and read—

"We regret to learn that Mr. R. C. Fairfax, while riding out on the Belair Pike, about fifteen miles from town, was yesterday thrown from his carriage, and sustained injuries of so serious a nature that but slight hopes are entertained of his recovery. He suffers great agony, and is lying at his home."

I dropped the paper, and a sudden resolution filled my mind. I felt assured that he had been coming to me when the fearful accident occurred; now I would go to him, and ere the shades of death closed over him I would tell him of my love, and he would sigh out his last breath in my arms.

In a few words I told my mother all. She did not remonstrate, for she knew it would be useless, and at one o'clock that afternoon I stood on the marble steps of my dying lover's palatial home.

I was half choked with a sense of sudden relief when I found there was no floating crape at the door, and knew that I was not too late.

The servant who answered my ring told me, in response to my questioning, that "Young master was very—very low, indeed."

"I must see him!" I said, boldly. "I am a dear friend of his, and I know, could he speak, he would desire my presence."

The man hesitated a moment, and then said respectfully:

"If madam will please step into the dining-room, I will speak to Mr. Fairfax about it." I walked into an elegant room, all crimson and gold; but little did I care then for splendor.

Who was "Mr. Fairfax?" Probably the

and I became Mrs. Fairfax that same summer. That was twenty years ago, and I am still the happiest wife the sun ever shone upon.

THE HANGER-ON.

"Boots and Brewer," of Dickensian birth, represent a larger class of sycophants than we wish existed. Society abounds with hangers-on. What small share of pleasure they receive in the pursuit of it, we do not envy them. The hanger-on receives his reward in being invited to many dinners and dances, and in being the recipient of a vast amount of condescending patronage. People talk about him as a useful fellow, who is exceedingly kind and obliging. When any one has to play second fiddle he is the one selected, because "he won't be offended, you know," besides, if he were, it would not be a matter of very great importance. He is,



"GLORIES OVER SEA AND GROUND
SPACIOUSLY POURING"—

younger brother of Reginald—for I had often heard him speak of "Chester" with great affection.

I walked restlessly to the further end of the long room, and leaned my hot head against the marble mantelshelf, trying to imagine how my lover would look, and wondering if he would know me.

The door opened and closed, and I turned.

"Ethel, darling, you here!"

I looked up, and Reginald Fairfax stood before me, his eyes eagerly scanning my features, and a joyful light breaking over his face.

"I thought you were dying," I whispered, half choked with the happiness of seeing him alive and well beside me.

"No, it was my brother Chester, who was injured. And did you come to see me when you thought me dying? Did you come?"

I was silent, and he clasped my hands in his, and said eagerly—

"Tell me why you came, Ethel."

"To tell you that I loved you!" I sobbed out, and he took me in his arms and held me against his heart; and then I knew that we could never part again except as affianced lovers.

"But the paper said it was Mr. R. C. Fairfax," I said, at last, after he had kissed my tears away, and I had grown calmer.

"Yes, our initials are the same. My name is Reginald Castleton—a family name—and my brother's Roland Chester."

"How is he?"

"Much better now, and the doctor thinks he will recover."

My story is told. My mistake sealed my fate,

further, considered a "safe" man. It is not likely that he will be guilty of the arrant folly and presumption of making love to the daughters of the parents who invite him to their houses. He has more regard for his true interests, and knows his position too well to do that. It is very well understood between those whom he pays homage to and himself what his position is. He is quite aware that it would never do for him to be in the slightest degree eccentric, or to have opinions—genuine opinions—of his own. If he were not willing to compliment Mrs. Jamfuzzle upon the juvenility of her appearance, and Mr. Jamfuzzle upon his wondrous powers of oratory, and his extraordinary knowledge of the world, he might as well retire from the campaign. To applaud every speech that comes from the lips of his patrons, to laugh heartily at their weak jokes, is a part of his programme. To frown down those whom they look coldly upon, to adapt himself to their fashions, though the most objectionable ever called into existence for the mortification of human kind—this, also, is a part of the delightful task which he voluntarily undertakes. That a man pursuing such a course can make many friends is simply impossible. That he must constantly be the subject of intense mortification is equally certain; and that he must lose his own self-respect and that of his fellows, to a certain extent, is true. Added to this, that he is generally, in the end, cast adrift by those to whom he plays the sycophant, and taken in hand by the very second-rate "swells," and it may well be asked if the game which he plays is worth the candle?

WONDERS OF NEWSPAPER PRINTING.

The New York *Herald* claims that its last Sunday edition numbered 150,000 copies. Each number consisted of twenty pages, that is one hundred and twenty columns, of which seventy-eight were advertisements and forty-two reading matter. The *Herald* says:—

A detail which will be perfectly new to non-professionals is, that to produce one hundred and fifty thousand full copies it was necessary to take nine hundred thousand impressions. To accomplish this, in the short time allowed, two rotary Hoe presses of eight and ten cylinders each and two Bullock perfecting presses were kept rolling off one thousand impressions per minute. To drive those huge presses two engines of eighty horse-power are kept in motion by burning six tons of coal in the furnaces. To form the stereotype plates for the cylinders, eight tons of type metal were melted down to cast one hundred and forty-eight plates, weighing when finished and dressed thirty-eight pounds each. The ink on a single copy would not be taken into consideration by the average observer, but it required seven hundred and twenty-five pounds to keep the rollers prepared to leave the imprint of their kisses on the eighteen million virgin pages that were to glow at daylight with the news. And those rollers were composed of five hundred pounds of glue mingled with one thousand pounds of honey. Then the virgin pages—the paper on which all this is printed. There are eighty men and boys about the presses handling it. Sheet after sheet it is passed by the feeders, until seventeen tons, or thirty-four thousand pounds, are printed on both sides. If you were to pile those sheets up one upon the other they would form a monument one hundred and twenty-five feet high.

THE RUSSIAN WINTER PALACE.

The home of the Russian imperial family from October to June, every year, is the Winter Palace. The immense building has a frontage of more than seven hundred feet, and is large enough to lodge six thousand persons. A curious story is told how, some time ago, the forty-three watchmen stationed along the roofs of this palace built huts under the shelter of the chimney-stacks to protect themselves from the inclemency of the weather, and how after a while, being lonely, they brought thither their wives and children, and commenced housekeeping. The little colony prospered, and hens and geese, and goats, and swine were gradually introduced into the premises. All might have gone on very prosperously for an indefinite time, but unfortunately a cow was taken up, and she became so uneasy that the czar learned the whole affair, and the colony was dispersed. All the arrangements of the Winter Palace show great wealth, consummate skill and exquisite taste. The suites of apartments occupied by the Empress and by Alexander, the present heir-apparent, and his family, are fitted up with great beauty and appropriateness. The children's nursery is one of the most interesting rooms in the whole palace, containing little furniture but a good supply of toys of every description. A room fitted up as a study, and which was appropriated to the crown prince and the grand duke Alexis in their boyhood, contains firearms, swords, military accoutrements and models of all kinds. A huge model of an iron-clad ship of war, completely and beautifully rigged, occupies a whole side of the page-room. Everything indicates the wisdom and care bestowed in the education of the sons.

THE CORK TREE.

In the south of Portugal, Africa and Spain, the cork tree is found in its wild state. The tree is a peculiar kind of oak, and the cork is the soft, cellular interior bark, lying just inside the exterior woody covering. It is removed by making several longitudinal clefts up and down the trunk, and then girdling the latter with horizontal incisions. This operation is not performed, however, until the tree has attained a certain age, generally fifteen years, and the first crop is employed only for inferior purposes. Seven years afterwards the tree will have another coating of bark, which is stripped and used for making corks, and so on every five to seven years, according to the quality of the ground. The tree does not suffer from the process of scraping, as it generally lives from one to two hundred years. After the layers of cork are stripped, they are inspected and assorted, according to their sizes and quality, those of the finest texture being of the greatest value. The inferior portions are generally sorted out, their crust burnt off and sold mostly for floats, thus receiving the name of fishing cork. The better qualities are first boiled and scraped, and then blackened over a coal fire, the object being to make the surface smooth, and at the same time to conceal flaws. Some varieties, generally the best, are faced, in order to exhibit the fineness of their texture. After being forwarded to the warehouses, the largest slabs are cut into pieces of about three and a half feet in length, eighteen inches in width, and ranging from one inch to three inches in thickness. Drying and packing in bales weighing one hundred and fifty pounds each follows, and the cork is ready for exportation.